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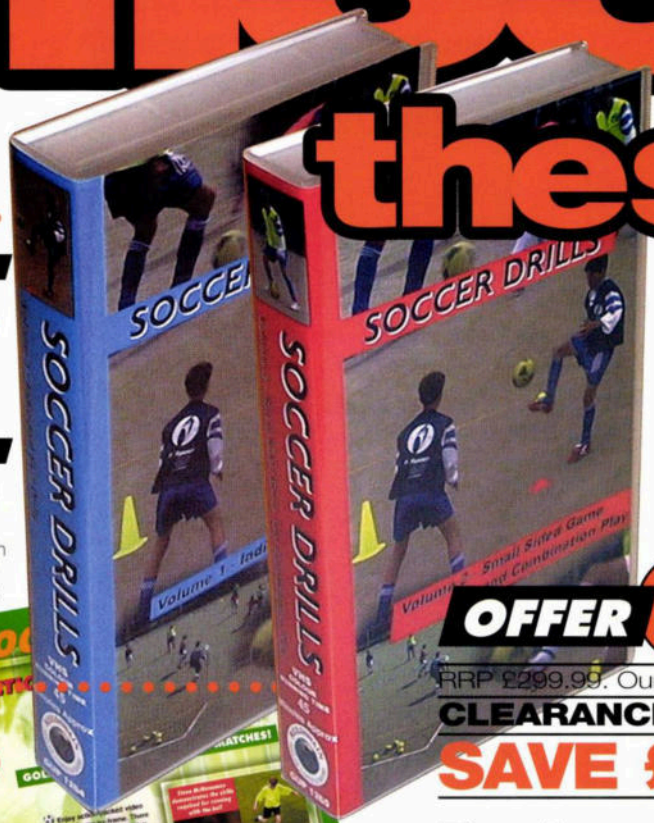

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Contents

June 2000

THERE'S no denying that the amount of money sweeping through football has reached frighteningly high proportions. But who is getting what and how much, and how they are spending it, are questions that we have tried to answer this month, with the help of the good people at Soccer Investor. Read their exclusive report on football wealth starting on page 19.

Strikers loom large this month. We talk to cover star Andrii Shevchenko (page 16) about his successful first season in Serie A. The flipside is our report and analysis of Ronaldo's latest knee injury (page 6).

Next month, we publish a special double-sized Euro 2000 issue. The increased news-stand cover price will pay for an unrivalled preview of the tournament. I don't need to tell you what to expect, but if you can't wait until June 1, you can get the latest Euro 2000 news at worldsoccer.com, our brand new website. After some technical hitches, it is now up and running and well worth checking out.

Gavin Hamilton, Editor (gavin_hamilton@ipc.co.uk)

16

6 Ronaldo
How injury has put his career in jeopardy

16 COVER STORY
Andrii Shevchenko
Making his mark with Milan

19 Football Wealth Report 2000
Our seven-page special examines the finances of Europe's top clubs

27 Euro 2000
Men who matter: Van der Sar, Paulo Sousa, Guardiola

19

27

81

REGULARS

Keir Radnedge 4
Libero 6
World Service 43
Crossword 92
Brian Glanville 96

WORLD NEWS

Italy 62
Spain 66
Germany 68
France 70
UK 72
Western Europe 74
Central & Eastern Europe 80
South America 82
North & Central America 85
Africa 86
Asia 88
Oceania 92

Pro-files

63 Simone Inzaghi
67 Gerard
69 Alexander Zickler
71 Ludovic Giuly
73 Steven Gerrard
77 John Arne Riise
79 Mateja Kezman
81 Georgi Demetradze
83 Rubiel Quintana
89 Sami Al-Jaber

Keir Radnedge

COMMENTARY

'It's time the game took more positive steps to get police out – in the nicest possible way'

Fans must take more responsibility

THE Istanbul murders of two Leeds United fans brought back into focus my old contention that fans travelling abroad need to use a frequently disregarded virtue called commonsense.

I was amazed to hear a spokesman for the Football Supporters' Association professing the bland view that the police – whether in Istanbul, Rotterdam, Marseille or Rome – carry total and ultimate responsibility for protecting every last hair on every travelling fan's head.

Frankly, the police have much better things to do than 'mind' football fans. I wouldn't advise telling any crime victim in Leeds on the day of the second leg with Galatasaray that normal policing was reduced because of football duties. I would go further: in my opinion the police are far too deeply involved in English football and it's time the game took more positive steps to get them out – in the nicest possible way. And when I say 'the game', that means the authorities, the clubs and – most of all – the fans.

I'm tired of all the supporters' spokesmen who demand voting rights and board membership, and complain about changes in seating arrangements, but offer little practical help where they should have the most influence: out in the crowds.

Saying 'it's all down to the police' is not merely unimaginative and impractical, it's socially irresponsible.

Banner men...the time has come for fans to grow up

The police would be delighted if they could withdraw from the stadia. The authorities could help with improved stewarding and procedures. A lot has been done in this sphere but enormous strides still need to be taken to train stewards in how to strike the right balance.

If the game can do that, then we can also go back to the days when cup replays could be staged within three or four days of the original tie – not a week and a half later to suit police logistics.

Years ago, most games in England needed only minimal supervision. Match duty was a perk. Then along came the hooligan and all that changed.

But for years the powers that be were content to allow hooliganism in and around football grounds (in other countries, violent expressions of social discontent were aired in city centres). So in England nobody worried. The police knew where the violence took place every week: at the local football ground. It was self-contained. Cosy. Convenient.

Not so convenient for people in towns and cities across Europe damaged by English thuggery (the 1974 UEFA Cup Final second leg between Feyenoord and Tottenham in Rotterdam is generally acknowledged as the start line). But they were foreign, so they didn't matter.

Scandalously, it wasn't until 11 years later, provoked by the Heysel disaster, that the English political classes woke up to the monster their complacency had created.

The Bradford fire, a few days before Heysel, and the Hillsborough tragedy four years later, changed the landscape of the English game. All-seater stadia were the obvious sign of change, along with closed-circuit TV and the police levels that today's game has inherited.

A few weeks ago, the Spanish and Italian Leagues switched all their matches from Saturday and Sunday to Friday and Saturday – at a week's notice – to accommodate the needs of their South American World Cup players. That couldn't be done in England. The police couldn't cope.

Of course, resentment exists at such police control. But do people really believe the police want it? They don't. Nor do police forces abroad, either.

Fans must grow up. For example, it's not up to the police to keep you safe crossing the road. The initial responsibility lies with the individual. Similarly, if you choose to go, as a fan, to any of the places named above, then the provocative history of English fans abroad makes you a target.

Empty promises...a change of name cannot hide the stadium's shortcomings

Dummy run highlights security risks

BELGIAN security officials professed themselves to be "satisfied...pleased... delighted" with events at the Belgium v Holland friendly in the King Baudouin stadium, Brussels, in March – one of the key venues for the Euro 2000 finals.

Either they were kidding themselves or they were trying to kid the media, their public and the thousands of fans who will descend on them in June.

I found a state of unreadiness that would have sent a shiver down the spine of anyone who attended the 1985 European Cup Final in the same stadium, when it was known as Heysel.

The Belgian police federation called, long ago, for the sensitive England v Germany tie to be switched from Charleroi to the capital "because only a major venue can provide the level of security this match demands". Judging by what was on offer to travelling fans at Heysel – sorry, Baudouin – then the prospect of England v Germany in Charleroi is worrying indeed.

Some 57 Dutch fans were arrested during the 2-2 draw between the Euro 2000 co-hosts. Any police force might consider that to be a reasonable tally for a match between such old rivals. But the arrangements, coupled with concerns about the undermining effect on security of ticket tout operations, raise new fears.

Belgium v Holland was supposed to have been an ideal dummy run for all the organisational arrangements. It was not: starting with the journey that most supporters will take to the stadium – on the metro from the city centre. Fans have a choice of three stations at which to alight, but none had adequate signposting to the various sections of the ground. Thus hordes had to walk, unnecessarily and potentially dangerously, around almost the entire stadium to find their sector.

Beyond the perimeter of the stadium area was a security cordon checking match tickets but, certainly where I passed through, nobody was checking bags for potentially dangerous items.

Within the outer zone and outside the stadium limit, signposting was minimal, and when fans did find the right turnstile, the entry system was a joke.

The continental system, used at Baudouin, is to pass through an open gateway and then have tickets checked by a steward. In Brussels, a single steward was waiting to inspect ticket stubs, but fans were piling through the turnstile at a rate faster than he could tear paper. Dutch supporters near me in the stadium owned up to having entered without tickets.

Once through the ticket check, or lack of it, signs directing fans to the correct block were again less than adequate, adding to the sense that security and safety are poor at the stadium that will host the opening match of Euro 2000 on June 10.

Lucas looks to Europe

LUCAS RADEBE caused panic in South Africa when he was reported to be mulling over the problems of the club v country dilemma. South Africa's World Cup schedule will not slot easily in between the demands exerted upon Leeds in European competition – whether in the Champions League or UEFA Cup next season. No wonder Radebe was caught thinking out loud.

But it's a safe bet that if South Africa reach the 2002 finals, Radebe will be there. After that, of course, is another matter entirely.

Aigner exposed by own goal

YOU have to hand it to UEFA's chief executive, Gerhard Aigner, for sheer nerve. The man who has led the European federation's golden-hooved gallop into the arms of big business is warning that too many matches are being played and that the big clubs have too much power.

Which organisation handed it all to them on a plate bearing its own monogram?

Knotty dot-com problem for UEFA

EURO 2000 is not quite part of the dot-com revolution. The all-singing, all-dancing website created by event sponsors Psion and Sportal can be accessed at www.euro2000.org rather than euro2000.com. This is because someone else managed to register the former title first.

UEFA, through sponsor manager ISL, is sueing for the right to be considered priority owner of the rights to the 'euro' title.

Presumably UEFA will then want the European currency renamed as well.

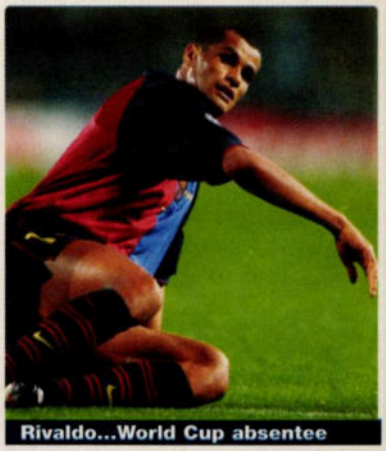
Perhaps it could be a 'uefa' rather than a 'euro'.

Club loss is country loss

THE wear and tear of European fixture pressure caught up with Brazil when Rivaldo missed his country's opening World Cup qualifier. Only FIFA president Sepp Blatter could take any comfort from such an event, which underlined the importance of a speedy introduction of a harmonised international calendar.

Rivaldo, substituted during Barcelona's 2-1 win over La Coruna because of a back injury, was the fourth player to miss Brazil's trip to Colombia – but not the last: Cafu, injured playing for Roma, also had to pull out.

Their national coach, Wanderley



Rivaldo...World Cup absentee

Luxemburgo, said: "I can't believe how this has been allowed to happen."

Brazil's problems began when FIFA, under pressure from European clubs, ruled that South American players could be released only four days, not five, before a World Cup tie. The Italian and Spanish Leagues moved most fixtures forward to Friday and Saturday so South American imports could play before flying home.

That was when Rivaldo and Cafu were injured.

Honest Alan

ALAN GREEN is not everyone's favourite football reporter, but he's honest. If a game is not entertaining, then Radio Five Live's number one football commentator says so.

That approach has upset Sky pundit Andy Gray. But then TV commentators – with the notable exception of Barry Davies – want you to believe every game is wonderful so that you will tune in again to maintain their viewer share and prospects of winning the next TV contract.

Vote for honesty, vote Green.

RONALDO'S INJURY LIST

October 11, 1995 Injures his right knee playing for Brazil in a 2-0 friendly win over Uruguay. Limps off at half-time after scoring both goals. Returns to Holland but carries on playing for PSV.

February 1996 Finally undergoes surgery in Holland to repair his damaged knee. Returns to action as a substitute in the Dutch Cup Final on May 16, 1996.

June-July, 1998 Plays through the World Cup finals on painkillers to deaden the pain of tendonitis in his knees. Mystery surrounds his lacklustre performance in the Final.

September 20, 1998 Scores a penalty against Piacenza in his first League game of the new season, but is then sidelined with tendonitis for three matches.

November 8, 1998 Scores in the Milan derby but limps off with another knee injury.

January 17, 1999 Breaks down again in a League match in Bologna. Out for two months.

March 13, 1999 Returns to action in the Milan derby amid claims that his return has been rushed.

November 21, 1999 Limps off after scoring in Inter's 6-0 win over Lecce at San Siro.

November 30, 1999 The injury is more serious than it first appeared and Ronaldo undergoes surgery for a ruptured knee tendon in Paris.

April 12, 2000 Ruptures the same knee tendon six minutes after appearing as a substitute in the first leg of the Italian Cup Final.

Ronaldo: is this the end?

The future of the former World Player of the Year hangs in the balance after another serious knee injury. Gavin Hamilton reports

'WE SAW him do a couple of feints and then he went down with no one near him. We knew immediately it was the same injury to the same knee."

Inter coach Marcello Lippi could only watch from the touchline in despair. He had just seen Ronaldo, world football's most explosive talent, crash to the ground in howling agony only six minutes into his comeback game following a five-month lay-off.

A deathly hush hung over Rome's Stadio Olimpico. Everybody present for the Italian Cup Final first leg between Lazio and Inter could see that it was serious. The painful, uncomfortable, disturbing truth was that Ronaldo had injured the same right knee tendon that had required surgery last November. The very same knee that had been operated on in 1996 when the teenage Ronaldo was in his second season with PSV.

"The lad has put in a lot of hard work to get back," said Lippi. "So for this to happen after just a few minutes is heart-wrenching."

It was all supposed to be so different for Ronaldo. Seven days earlier his wife Milene had given birth to his first child, a son named Ronald. His appearance as a second-half substitute against Lazio had come with the full blessing of Inter's medical staff and the French surgeon, Gerard Saillant, who had operated on him last November.

"At last I can play without feeling pain in my knee," Ronaldo declared on the eve of his comeback.

And yet, in a horrific take on the movie *Groundhog Day*, Ronaldo's medical history repeated itself.

The Brazilian was flown to Paris in Inter president Massimo Moratti's private jet. Professor Saillant performed a two-hour operation. Visitors to the Parisian clinic included Brazil coach Wanderley Luxemburgo and Ronaldo's mother, who insisted on sleeping in his room.

Saillant explained that the patella

Moment of impact...Ronaldo's knee tendon snaps six minutes into his comeback match

tendon had ruptured completely. "We've put it together again with extra tissue to make it more solid," he said. "All being well, Ronaldo will play again at the beginning of 2001. We can't expect miracles."

The doctor said that Ronaldo's explosive style of play may have contributed to the injury. "Ronaldo has suffered for two years from fragility in his ligaments. Many top athletes have a weak point and Ronaldo's is his patella ligament.

"He collapsed the third time he put his weight on his knee. There was association between the fragility of the player and his exceptional sporting qualities."

Saillant's comments only served to heighten the debate as to whether Ronaldo's career can survive this latest setback.

In Italy, some argue that the original operation in Holland in 1996 lies at the root of Ronaldo's problems.

In Brazil, the debate has focused on Ronaldo's weight, with some suggesting that the player has taken artificial measures to increase his upper body strength. Leading sports surgeon Moises Cohen told *Lance!*: "If we compare the Ronaldo of PSV with the Ronaldo who went on to the field against Lazio, we can see that they are two totally different people. Only his teeth are the same.

"Nature didn't produce his body to have the weight that it carries today. Increasing muscular mass artificially provokes terrible anomalies in athletes' bodily systems, and inevitably creates problems."

The player himself admitted last year to a local Tuscan TV station that he had a "chronic" knee problem. (This was dismissed by Inter as a translation error, which the reporter denies.)

Inter, for their part, believe Ronaldo's mystery illness before the 1998 World Cup Final was in some way linked to excess use of painkillers. Senior club figures remain convinced that Ronaldo was pushed too hard throughout the tournament, overdosing on the painkillers and doing untold harm.

Gerard Saillant, the doctor best acquainted with Ronaldo's damaged knee, believes his patient can reach the heights again, but that he may have to change his style of play to do so. And that may prove too difficult.

"He's 23, he's not old, but it's hard to change, not like when you're 11 or 12. If he changed he might no longer be Ronaldo."

Paddy Agnew

OPINION

Time to reflect as Soccer-Biz claims its biggest victim

AS A distraught Ronaldo was carried off the pitch at Rome's Stadio Olimpico, crying tears of pain and despair, the same ominous thoughts crossed millions of minds worldwide – namely, at the age of just 23, is this the end for Ronaldo?

The point about Ronaldo, of course, is that ever since his £19million transfer from Barcelona to Inter in 1997, he has been billed as the greatest one-man soccer show on earth. As such he is the perfect promotional advertising vehicle for a range of products that stretches from football boots to high-performance tyres.

Four multinationals – Nike sportswear, Parmalat dairy products, Pirelli tyres and Brahma beer – as well as his club, Inter, have all invested heavily in soccer's brightest *wunderkind*.

Inter pay Ronaldo an average annual after-tax salary close to £2.2m, while Nike pay him an estimated £1m, Pirelli £900,000, Parmalat £300,000 and Brahma £300,000.

The fresh-faced, clean-living boy with the bucktoothed grin seemed to have something for all his clients. For his sponsors, an instantly marketable face that even the United Nations has occasionally (and for free) recruited in campaigns against world hunger.

For Inter, lots of goals, a UEFA Cup and a close-run thing in the Italian title contest in his first season.

As every football fan knows, however, ever since France 98 Ronaldo has been more crock than crack. For two seasons now, he has been dogged by a succession of knee tendon problems that have earned him the unfortunate title of the world's most injured footballer.

What has gone wrong? Is it simply Mother Nature? Is Ronaldo's chassis, formed in childhood poverty, simply not able to take the pressure of highly developed, muscular 'motor'?

Or has his career suffered from ill-advised medical treatment?

After all, Ronaldo's injury problems are not new. As far back as February 1996, he underwent surgery in Holland while with PSV Eindhoven for a rotular tendon problem in his right knee.

Certainly, it is a sobering consideration that the operation carried out in Paris on April 13 by Professor Gerard Saillant was the third of its kind on Ronaldo's right knee in four years.

If Mother Nature and poor medical treatment are not to blame, then we are left with the most uncomfortable thought of all.

Namely, that football or the pressures of Soccer-Biz have contributed to the temporary (we hope) downfall of the world's one-time number one player.

Have commercial considerations been entirely estranged from the decisions to play Ronaldo in crunch, prestige games such as the France 98 World Cup Final and perhaps also Inter's Champions League quarter-final, second leg tie against Manchester United last season?

Ronaldo's unhappy time at the last World Cup certainly begs some serious questions. Although he had appeared to make a complete recovery from his 1996 surgery in Holland, he suffered a recurrence of chronic tendonitis in his knees during France 98.

Whatever the cause of Ronaldo's lacklustre showing in the Paris Final, it is certain that since then he has had two miserable injury-ridden years, during which he has never been able to recover the form and fitness shown in his excellent first season in Italy.

As he prepares for an uncertain future, it is difficult not to wonder if Ronaldo is not a victim of Soccer-Biz. Had he not been such a famous, sponsorised and contractualised name, would he have been given more time to heal during France 98, last season and this?

To be fair to Inter, they point out that they have taken all the best (and most expensive) medical advice in the world to deal with their prodigy.

Perhaps Professor Saillant is right when he claims that Ronaldo's most recent injury is "nobody's fault" but rather "a rare occurrence".

While the jury may be out on whether Ronaldo's problems are attributable to Soccer-Biz, Mother Nature or poor medical attention (or to all three), one thing is for sure: we shall not see Ronaldo in competitive action again for some time ...if ever.

NOTES AND QUOTES

"It's only sport. What happened to me is sheer madness."
Bayern Munich keeper Oliver Kahn after being hit by a golf ball thrown by an opposition supporter during his team's 2-1 Bundesliga win at Freiburg.

"We must improve the technical ability in our game. We are inferior to the Scandinavian countries, Holland and France."
Austrian federation spokesman Ralf Mahr explains the reason why 29 centres of excellence for 12- to 14-year-olds are being set up throughout the country.

"There is no point changing coach again. Bernd Krauss is our man."
Borussia Dortmund general manager Michael Meier. Twenty-four hours later, Krauss was sacked and replaced by Udo Lattek.

"It was a lynching."
Monaco general manager Henri Biancheri on the alleged half-time attack by Marseille players and assistant coach Christophe Galtier on Monaco's Argentinian midfielder Marcelo Gallardo in the tunnel at the Stade Velodrome. Galtier has been suspended for six months for his part in the bust-up.

Amazing Calais follow that dream

Nick Bidwell reports on the Cup fairy tale that has stunned France

NO LONGER is the Channel port of Calais known solely for its ferry terminals, cash and carry warehouses and hypermarkets. These days the town is also famous for its Fourth Division football team, the first amateur side to reach the French Cup Final.

After knocking out Second Division Lille and Cannes then going one better by seeing off top-flight Strasbourg and Bordeaux, the red-and-yellow stripes of Calais RUFC – Calais Racing and Union Football Club – will meet holders Nantes in the Final at the Stade de France in Paris on May 7. Boosted by their giantkilling exploits, the minnows firmly believe they can keep the dream going to the very end.

"Nantes are an excellent team, with many fine young players, and of course the Stade de France is unknown territory to us," says Calais striker Christophe Hogard. "But we have not made it this far by accident and have qualities of our own. We have proved that in a one-off game, we can pull ourselves up to the level of supposedly superior opponents. We will prepare for the Final like all the other rounds, give a good account of ourselves and make life difficult for Nantes.

"What has happened to us is surreal, it's a dream. At the moment, it hasn't sunk in. We will only truly realise the scope of our achievement later. We are all going to have wonderful memories to share with our grandchildren."

And who would bet against the resourceful part-timers again upsetting the odds in the Final? Certainly not the 40,000 fans present at their 3-1 semi-final victory over Bordeaux, which though technically a Calais home game, was held at the nearby Stade de Bollaert in Lens, the region's largest, most comfortable ground.

Few experts gave the Calais collection of shop and office workers, salesmen and students a prayer against the reigning League champions and their highly paid ensemble of internationals.

Yet Calais were to prove conclusively that the result of a cup-tie is not dependent on the size of a club's budget (Bordeaux £22million; Calais £140,000).

Bordeaux may have dominated the game for long spells and were unfortunate when Yugoslav central defender Nisa Saveljic hit the bar with a header in the second half. However, the valiant, industrious Calais side were good value for their win nonetheless.

A goalless scoreline at the end of 90 minutes on the back foot was a tribute to Calais' defensive organisation and sheer grit, and in extra-time the amateurs proved

We've done it...Calais celebrate their semi-final triumph

Paul Gardner

GLOBAL VIEW

On target...Cedric Jandau

even more impressive. Cedric Jandau put them ahead but when Lilian Laslandes came up with a Bordeaux equaliser just seven minutes later it looked for all the world as if the game was up for the underdogs.

Not so. Incredibly, the part-timers finished the stronger, with goals from Mathieu Millien and Mickael Gerard delivering the *coup de grace*.

Cue an all-night party in the streets of Calais and a 3am reception committee at the Town Hall for the heroes of the hour, though there was a scare when coach Ladislas Lozano was taken to hospital complaining of chest pains.

Fortunately, the diagnosis was exhaustion and Lozano should recover in time to lead out his team at the Cup Final.

"On the face of it, there was no comparison between Bordeaux and ourselves," declared Calais skipper and left-back, Reginald Becque. "They are a group of very experienced top-level players, while many of us were rejected by professional clubs. But we didn't dwell on that. It was still 11 against 11.

"Although we respected Bordeaux, we knew we couldn't stand around and admire them. We had to compete with them as intensely as we could, and in the end we got the result we so badly wanted."

Unlimited substitutes - another crazy idea from blinkered coaches

A CURSE on coaches and their short-sighted, narrow-minded view of soccer! They have struck again, it seems. Struck at the very roots of the game. Either they know not what they do, or they don't care. Difficult to decide which is worse.

We are told that one of FIFA's latest rule changes – allowing unlimited substitutions in exhibition games – comes as a result of pressure from coaches. FIFA should stop listening to them. They rarely come up with a good idea and certainly not one that has the good of the game as its aim.

As it happens, I was one of a handful of journalists who had the highly dubious privilege of witnessing a previous brainwave from the coaches: the great time-out experiment. The February 1995 issue of *FIFA News* spelt out the glad tidings: "For some time now coaches have been clammering for the chance to be able to exert more immediate influence on the course of the game..."

It should have said "clamouring", but I rather liked the FIFA-invented word "clammer". It gave me a collective noun I'd been searching for: a clammer of coaches.

The clammer of coaches got its way. That same year, at the Under-17 World Cup in Ecuador, time-outs were on the menu. Each coach was allowed to call one stoppage per half. The first time-out, in the opening game, was called by Japan. After a few seconds of puzzled silence, the fans filled the stadium with hoots and whistles. They hated it.

The Japanese coach obviously liked it – and got tripped up beautifully. In a later game, with his team leading USA 1-0, he signalled a time-out. He filled the allotted 90 seconds with (I assume) diabolically clever instructions. Within a minute USA had eq

Awkward, that. When you the other coach gets to talk to

FIFA vice-president David "The coaches say that it will game." And FIFA believed th there was no evidence of bet experiment was a farcical flo

You don't hear much talk these days. But don't bet aga coming back. When you're d coaching, you can't keep a b.

For the moment, the clam has secured another perverte already started in the USA, t unlimited substitutions in friendlies. Al Kleinaitis, in charge of referee training at the United States Soccer Federation, seems to be bursting with enthusiasm: "When Hamburg come to play Chicago Fire in late May, both coaches can have 20 or 22 players ready to play, and will be able to use them all. The fans will see a good, even match, and the coaches will be able to see some younger players...it's a win-win situation for everyone."

Whatever is the man talking about? Fans who go to an exhibition game (ticket prices are never cheap) want to see full teams with all the stars.

Back in the 1960s, top teams such as Santos and Inter went to the New York area and drew large crowds – because all their stars played full games. That didn't last too long. The stars started to play only one half, play lethargically, or not show up at all. The bottom fell out of the exhibition game market in a hurry. Now, fans are being told that paying through the nose to watch basically reserve teams is good for them.

Increasing the importance of coaches has become a bad habit at FIFA. The trend started – unnoticed – in 1970, when substitutes were first permitted at the World Cup. The real damage was done in 1990, when FIFA sneaked in a memorandum to referees decreeing that coaching would be allowed from the bench area – effectively demolishing the long-standing rule against touchline coaching.

By 1993 it was official. The rules now said that such coaching was OK, and the 'technical area' was created. The coach was getting more and more involved in the actual playing of the game.

low comes an expansion of his role as all-wise puppet-master who pulls the gs on his substitutes. In many ways, this most cynical move of the lot.

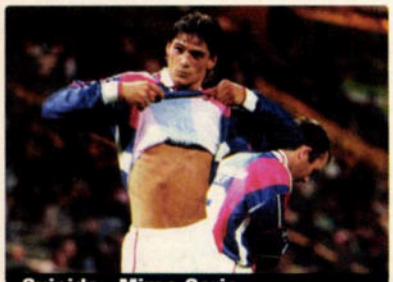
omiscuous substitution is a menace use it encourages the physical aspects at xpense of skill. We have suffered from plight for many years in the USA, where ive substitution (including re-entry) is the n in youth soccer.

f course coaches approve – because it nifies their involvement and dramatises presence. But do they ever ask selves what the unbridled use of titutes does to the Beautiful Game?

NOTES AND QUOTES

"Every good worker needs decent tools."
Luis Satorra, the captain of French First Division side Sedan, explains why he and his team-mates are boycotting certain training sessions in a protest against poor facilities at the club.

"I've never met a referee who refused money."
Oleg Teretchonkov, the former coach of St Petersburg club Smena Saturn, who claims that half of all Russian Second Division games were fixed during the 1990s.


Suicide...Mirco Saric

The jinx of San Lorenzo

MIRCO SARIC, 21, who committed suicide early in April, was the fourth player from one club to die in tragic circumstances over the past 20 years.

Saric, who played for Argentina's San Lorenzo, had been out injured and was depressed after being told he might not play again.

In 1981, San Lorenzo defender Hugo Pena was bathing an injured foot in a basin when he turned on a TV and was electrocuted.

In 1985, midfielder Jorge Coufanes was held up by muggers, who shot him dead.

Last year, striker Ruben Bernuncio crashed his car into a bus and died in hospital.

During the same period, winger Jose Casas, was walking near a military installation. A rifle shot tore through the upper part of an arm, which had to be amputated, and he was forced to retire.

And after a match in Cordoba, a hooligan threw a bomb into the San Lorenzo changing room. Defender Zacarias was so badly injured that his career was ended.

Eric Weil

Shaping up

Mustapha Fahmy, CAF general secretary, gives Mark Gleeson a progress report on the state of play in Africa

WORLD SOCCER: Were you happy with the recent Nations Cup finals?
MUSTAPHA FAHMY: Yes, we were really happy. CAF took a first step with the concept of co-hosting, with Ghana and Nigeria organising the event, and it went off well. There were no problems with the movement of teams, officials and referees. The images that were sent out to the world were positive.

Of course, we had some setbacks, like what happened in Ivory Coast [the military junta detaining the team] and Lagos [crowd trouble]. In Europe they always seem to focus on these kinds of problems, but they have happened in South America and we don't think this is tarnishing the image of African football.

There have been critics of co-hosting, but in Africa it could almost be a solution.
Yes, particularly for smaller countries. We at CAF have said it many times that we would like to give the opportunity to smaller countries to host the event, and co-hosting is the way for many who would never be able to host it on their own. We already have had a joint bid from Togo and Benin to stage the 2004 African Nations Cup, although this is not formalised yet.

Given all the expectations of the past decade, are you happy with where the African game is right now?
We have a strong bloc in world football now, but we are not always very united, as demonstrated by what happened with the FIFA presidential elections. At our congress in Ghana we have recovered this unity and hope it will be maintained, and that with this strong bloc we can safeguard African interests.

CAF has tried a lot over the past 10 years to improve the image, especially with the media. There is a big difference between our club competitions of the 1980s and the 1990s.

You have looked, as well, at cleaning up the image of the African game by imposing heavy fines on those who withdraw from competitions or renege on their offers to host competitions.
We are looking for a clean image, but sometimes we also understand the problems. We would prefer to have everybody participating. But if you enter competitions and then pull out, you not only destroy the image of the African game, but also mess up the fixtures.

Upbeat...Mustapha Fahmy

Why is there suddenly all this fuss about young African players going to Europe? It is the dream of all young Africans to land a lucrative contract with a European team.
There are many who do well but the problem is that there are many who don't play. They don't have a chance to realise their potential. We believe that if they go a little bit later it will be better for them.

Look, life is a lot different in Europe, but I understand the point of view that these players are seeking to make money to give themselves a better lifestyle and in most cases also support their families. But the money can also come later when the player's career is better established. He can make more financial gain in the long run.

Are you going to put some regulations in place?
We have some ideas, particularly about players who go to Europe, play just a handful of games and then are cast aside. There is also some thinking on FIFA's part about a change in the regulations on international appearances, particularly for some African youngsters who play one or two matches and are never picked again.

CNN WORLD SOCCER CLUB OF THE MONTH

1 Man United
2 Lazio
3 Bayern Munich
4 Barcelona
5 Corinthians
6 Milan
7 River Plate
8 Juventus
9 La Coruna
10 Valencia

Tim Vickery
OPINION

What about the FIFA regularisation of the international calendar?
This really is a headache. It will be difficult for us to play the Nations Cup finals in June and July, as is now being proposed. For the time being, for us, January and February remains the best option. It is difficult for us because we play the African Nations Cup every two years. And when it coincides with a World Cup finals that means double the number of games. FIFA are trying to sort out the problem now, and for us one possible solution is to have the Nations Cup qualifiers also serving as the World Cup qualifiers when they overlap. This is a good idea because it would help ease the congestion.

Regularising the calendar appears to be a concern of only the European clubs. Why must Africa change to suit those clubs?
I would agree with that and we haven't accepted anything yet. Look at South America. They have increased the number of matches they play in the World Cup qualifiers, not reduced them. It will be difficult for us because we have our realities to face here in Africa. It will be difficult to adapt but we'll try. Some of the dates can be adjusted to give the European clubs something, because they are the ones who are paying the players and we don't want to endanger the careers of our African players with European clubs. But we won't do that at the expense of stability and what is most suitable for our confederation.

When do you expect this issue will be laid to rest?
There won't be any big changes before the World Cup in 2002, but after that I'm sure.

Is CAF ever going to support one African bid for the 2006 World Cup?
We cannot make a choice and ask one of the two candidates to withdraw. But it is the right of CAF to decide which is the best candidate from Africa and to ask the African members of the executive committee to vote for that candidate. The four votes from Africa must go in the same direction. But the system employed for the voting should not prejudice the African bids, if the African votes are initially divided.

Glory not for sale

The magic of international football cannot be bought by rich European clubs

Earlier this year the Brazilian club Gremio claimed that Leeds United of England had made a £50million bid for their star striker, Ronaldinho Gaucho.

It is likely that no formal bid existed; Leeds issued a denial and Gremio refused to present the fax. The chances are that Gremio were playing games in the hope of hurrying Barcelona to the negotiating table.

The fact remains, though, that many European clubs would be prepared to pay big money for the young Brazilian. But were it merely for his achievements with Gremio, Ronaldinho would barely be a household name in his own home.

His market worth, his value to buyer and seller, results from his displays for Brazil, at Under-17, Under-20, Under-23 and senior level.

Ronaldinho is currently involved in South America's marathon World Cup qualification campaign, a source of fierce conflict between club and country. For decades, a move to Europe brought an abrupt end to a South American player's international career – unless he went on to be selected for Spain or Italy.

Then Maradona went to Barcelona and Zico to Udinese and, with improved air connections, it became possible for South Americans to fly back to represent their country during the season.

So now the European clubs are furious that they have to release their players once a month for long journeys across the Atlantic. They fought a battle with FIFA, and managed to have the release date put back to the last possible minute. Brazil took the field for their first World Cup qualifier, against Colombia, without the benefit of a single training session.

Conventional wisdom sides with the clubs. They pay the players' wages, so why should they release them when the national teams add to the already overcrowded calendar?

There is some truth in this, but it is far from the whole truth.

South America's World Cup qualification campaign is overblown. But the national teams are not the driving force behind football's cluttered calendar, as a glance at the Champions League confirms.

Also problematic is the underlying notion that international football is a parasite on the club game. The idea can just as easily be stood on its head.

Much of Michael Owen's reputation rests on an extraordinary few minutes against Argentina in the World Cup. Ronaldo will almost certainly never recover the prestige he lost in the strange events of the France 98 Final.

The World Cup is where reputations are made and broken. It is the pinnacle of the global game. It reaches more people, touches and inspires them at a level beyond the wildest dreams of the club game.

The World Cup is football's great trade show – and the clubs derive the benefits. Season ticket holders, sponsors and TV companies will pay out for a weekly fix of Salas, the Chilean matador, or Batistuta, the leading goalscorer in Argentina's history.

When Ronaldinho Gaucho makes his way to Europe the image sold will not be of a player in the light blue of Gremio, but in the yellow of Brazil. Local TV will doubtless show over and over the goal he scored against Venezuela in last year's Copa America, a delightful flick and exuberant finish, reminiscent of Pele himself.

The European clubs think that their economic strength can buy the magic of the stars of international football. But it is not for sale. It can only be borrowed, and shared.

For the good of the game, club and international football must find a way to live in harmony.

NOTES AND QUOTES

"My name is Jesus, not Jesus Christ. But I'm going to try to perform a miracle all the same."
Jesus Gil on returning to power at Spanish crisis club Atletico Madrid.

"I'm horrified by the violence which is becoming more and more prevalent on our fields of play and in our dressing rooms. What happened at Marseille is an outrage. We have to ring the alarm bell when players and coaches behave like hooligans."
Saint-Etienne president Alain Bompard.

"Footballers are like children."
Klaus Augenthaler, the former Germany and Bayern Munich libero turned coach of German Second Division side Nurnberg, reflects on IQ levels in the dressing-room.

Coming soon... Greenland v Tibet

PERHAPS the most unlikely international match in the history of football is being set up by Sepp Piontek, the coach who inspired the wonderful Danish Dynamite team of the 1980s.

Piontek is currently in charge of the newly-ambitious national side in Greenland, who are due to attain official FIFA status. And for his first challenge he wants them to take on the equally enthusiastic newcomers of Tibet. The match will probably take place on neutral territory, Copenhagen, in a couple of months because Tibet will be there on a two-week training stint in preparation for their first mini-tournament, against Nepal and India in August. Greenland, still a semi-colony of Denmark, have links there too.

Tibet have a Danish coach, Michael Nybrandt, who said: "The people are soccer-crazy. But the players are inexperienced and need all the matches they can get."

Jim Holden

Return of the gentle giant

Jim Holden talks to Clyde Best about the challenge of coaching Bermuda

LEGEND has it that ships get mysteriously lost in the Bermuda Triangle in the Atlantic Ocean. For decades the same has been true of international football, with the paradise island of Bermuda rarely bothering to enter World Cup qualifying competitions for fear of being thrashed.

That has all changed now with the return of the tiny nation's most celebrated player, Clyde Best. Remember him? He was a gentle giant of a striker who played alongside Bobby Moore, Geoff Hurst, Martin Peters and co at West Ham more than 30 years ago.

After travelling the globe as a football minstrel, with spells at Feyenoord, Tampa Bay Rowdies and Portland Timbers, and then enjoying an idyllic life working as a soccer coach at a college in California, he returned home to Bermuda three years ago.

Then...Best in playing days

The football authorities gave him mission impossible – taking his nation, ranked down in the 150s in the FIFA ratings, to the World Cup finals.

Best puts the task into perspective, saying: "Our entire population is only 50,000, less than the crowd who turn up for a Manchester United home match.

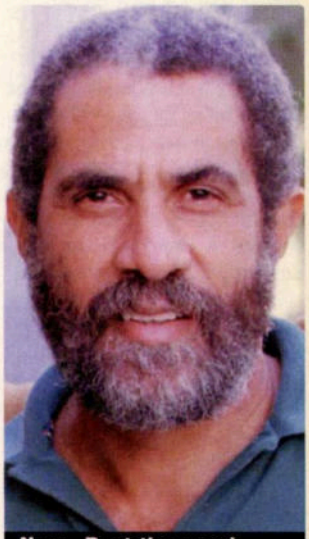
"A bumper gate for us would be 3,000. But numbers don't matter out on the field if you have skilful players and are well organised. We have players who will surprise people with their talent, like Shaun Goater from Manchester City and Kyle Lightbourne at Stoke City.

"And of course we take inspiration from the success of the Reggae Boyz from Jamaica. They showed that a Caribbean side could get to the World Cup finals, that it's not an impossible dream."

Bermuda overcame the British Virgin Islands with ease in the first qualifying round of the Caribbean section for the 2002 finals to earn a two-legged showdown against Antigua. Another victory would mean a chance to take on the major nations in the region, such as Mexico and the USA.

Best says the hardest part of his job has been to toughen the attitudes of his players on and off the field.

He explains: "Bermuda is a fantastic place. I was born and bred here and there can be few better places in the world. There is no poverty, no problems, just a lovely laid-back atmosphere. It has so many advantages, but one big disadvantage – the people are just too nice for football.


Now...Best the coach

"They didn't take enough aggression on to the field in the past, and that's a big disadvantage in a football match. I suppose a little of my job is to make sure that doesn't happen.

"I had a wonderful life in California, but I couldn't resist the chance to help my country when they asked. I wanted to give something back, and felt that was very important.

"I played only one international for Bermuda. We never entered the World Cup qualifiers in my day, and we didn't even enter for the last one in 1998.

"For us the hardest part is getting experience, getting games to help the players improve.

"Over in Europe you teach boys how to run, how to swivel on the ball, how to try tricks. Here, all that rhythm comes naturally and it just needs meshing together into a team framework. That's what I'm trying to do.

"We will improve if we get more games. I remember 30 years ago from when I was playing – it was easy to beat sides from Norway and Denmark. They were considered third-rate. But not any more. Norway are now the country which beats Brazil on a regular basis."

For all Best's optimism, it's still hard to envisage Bermuda doing that.

Final countdown

Chelsea meet Aston Villa in the last FA Cup Final at Wembley before it is rebuilt. David Prole says both occasion and tournament have become steadily devalued

THIS season's FA Cup Final is the 73rd such event to be played at Wembley, or the 78th if you include replays, and will be the last until the old stadium has been rebuilt.

The Football Association, in its wisdom, continues to be associated with the stadium company, as it has been ever since 1923 when Wembley staged its first Final, at a cost to the game of countless millions.

The FA does not own the stadium. As a result, it has to rent the ground, and has little direct control over what happens there.

Successive alterations to Wembley have reduced capacity while increasing ticket prices, and a visit there is no longer the pleasurable experience it was. Access is poor, the view from certain parts is as bad, and the entire place has a seedy, hamburger-drenched atmosphere that contrasts badly with any of the grounds that have been largely rebuilt in the wake of the Taylor Report into the Hillsborough disaster.

The competition itself has been devalued. One of the FA Cup's great strengths, from the earliest days, was that it offered fair shares to all, with rules that barely changed in more than a century. Now, things are different.

Take the draw, which used to be such a highlight of Monday lunchtimes. Now the job is done in the atmosphere of an old and not very amusing music-hall. The replays that used to fill so many midweek dates so excitingly have largely been swept away in favour of easier times for police and the penalty shoot-out.

And, worst of all, clubs may choose to ignore the competition in favour of the World Club Championship. Allowing Manchester United not to defend the trophy they won last year choked off rather more supporters (of the game in general, not the club) than Lancaster Gate might imagine.

The Cup Final is not as big an attraction as it used to be, but it still ranks high in the list of the year's English soccer events. This season's is no exception, with Chelsea, there for the third time in seven years (each under a different player-manager), facing Aston Villa, making their first appearance since 1957.

In that pre-substitute year they narrowly beat Manchester United in one of the several finals when one side had to play on after losing a man through injury. In 1981 Villa became surprise winners of the championship, and in the following season they were even more surprising winners of the European Cup, but they have done little since and – despite the presence of the excellent Dion Dublin up front – do not seem to have Chelsea's all-round ability.

Chelsea can be a match for any team and a master of many, at home or abroad. Their multi-national squad have had an excellent season in three competitions and there is talent in every corner.

Unfortunately for anti-Chelsea fans, and neutrals, Dennis Wise is still playing well enough to keep his place, thus extending the list of successive FA Cup Final captains who have a certain acquaintance with the boys in blue. Cantona, Wise, Adams and Keane have been the winning skippers over the past four years, and Wise is favoured to lift the trophy again this year.

Perhaps Villa will have a better chance if they give the captaincy to Paul Merson.

WEMBLEY MILESTONES

FA Cup Final firsts since Wembley became the venue in 1923

- **First winning club:** Bolton 1923.
- **First scorer:** David Jack (Bolton 1923).
- **First and only hat-trick:** Stan Mortensen (Blackpool 1953).
- **First player to score in successive finals:** Bobby Johnstone (Manchester City 1955 and 1956).
- **First player to score for two clubs:** Bert Turner (against and for Charlton, inside a minute, 1946).
- **First player to score for different clubs in different matches:** Frank Stapleton (Arsenal 1979, Manchester United 1983).
- **First club in successive finals:** Manchester City 1933 and 1934.
- **First club to win successive finals:** Newcastle 1951 and 1952.
- **First club to lose successive finals:** Manchester United 1957 and 1958.
- **First player to win with two clubs:** David Jack (Bolton 1923 and 1926, Arsenal 1930).
- **First and only manager to win with two clubs:** Billy Walker (Sheffield Wednesday 1935, Nottingham Forest 1959).
- **First man to win as player and manager:** Joe Smith (Bolton 1923 and 1926, Blackpool 1953).
- **First brothers:** John and William Smith (Portsmouth 1934).
- **First foreign national:** George Robledo (Newcastle and Chile 1951).
- **First substitute to play:** Dennis Clarke (West Brom 1968).
- **First substitute to score:** Eddie Kelly (Arsenal 1971).
- **First player to miss a penalty:** John Aldridge (Liverpool 1988).
- **First and only sending-off:** Kevin Moran (Manchester United 1985).
- **First and only four-time winner:** Mark Hughes (Manchester United 1985, 1990, 1993, Chelsea 1994).
- **First four-time loser:** Paul Bracewell (Everton 1985, 1986, 1989, Sunderland 1992).

WIN a football signed by members of England's 1966 World Cup-winning side

We have teamed up with Airtours to offer you the chance to win one of five footballs signed by Nobby Stiles, George Cohen, Roger Hunt, Alan Ball and Ray Wilson. All you have to do is answer the following question:

Name the Russian linesman whose controversial decision allowed England to take a 3-2 lead against West Germany in the 1966 World Cup Final.

Send your answer, not forgetting to include your name and address, by June 9 to:

World Soccer (1966 footballs), 24th Floor, King's Reach Tower, Stamford Street, London SE1 9LS

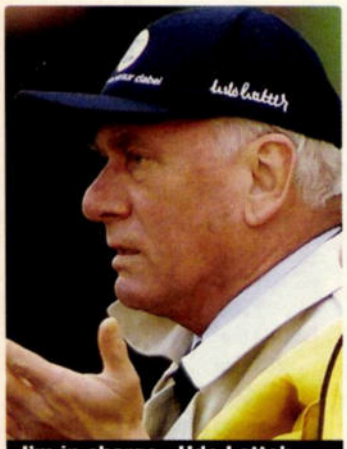
Usual IPC competition rules apply.

Airtours
The Holiday Makers

TRANSFERS

PLAYER		FROM	TO
Bo ANDERSEN	G	Bristol City	Viking Stavanger
ARGEL	D	FC Porto	Palmeiras
Mikkel BECK	F	Derby	AaB (loan)
Orjan BERG	M	Bodo/Glimt	Rosenborg
Rune JOHANSEN	F	Alta	Tromso
Nocko JOKOVIC	F	Silkeborg	AGF
Frederic KANOUTE	F	Lyon	West Ham (loan)
Sebastian KNEISSL	F	Eintracht Frankfurt	Chelsea
Milton NUNEZ	F	PAOK Salonika	Sunderland
Isaiah RANKIN	F	Birmingham City	Bradford City
Christian STEEN	D	Rosenborg	Bodo/Glimt
Nazim SULEIMANOV	F	Free agent	Zhemchuzhina
Mike UTTING	G	Auckland Kingz	SuperSport United

Lattek back


I'm in charge...Udo Lattek

COACHES ON THE MOVE

BORUSSIA DORTMUND went back to the future when they dismissed coach Bernd Krauss after only 67 days and appointed **Udo Lattek** as caretaker until the end of the season.

The switch was a major gamble because Lattek retired from coaching seven years ago and has since developed a lucrative career as a TV and magazine soccer analyst. His task now is to halt the 1997 European champions' plunge towards the relegation zone.

Lattek said he agreed to take over for the last five games of the season only because Dortmund guaranteed that **Matthias Sammer** could be his No 2.

Lattek, now 65, was the first coach to win all three European club prizes – the Champions Cup with Bayern Munich, the Cup-winners Cup with Barcelona and the UEFA Cup with Borussia Monchengladbach. He quit the Bundesliga in 1993 after a mixed time of it with Schalke.

Sammer, Dortmund's former sweeper, is clearly favourite to take over during the summer when Lattek goes back to the media world.

Elsewhere in Germany, relegation certainties Duisburg sacked coach **Friedhelm Funkel** and appointed his assistant, Seppo Eichkorn, to take over until the summer.

Former Vasco da Gama and Fiorentina coach **Sebastiao Lazaroni** has been named as national coach of Jamaica. He succeeds fellow Brazilian Rene Simoes, now with Flamengo.

Another Brazilian, **Gilson Siqueira Nunes**, has been appointed to coach the Costa Rican national team. He replaces Marvin Rodriguez who left after the Gold Cup earlier this year.

INTERNATIONAL INS AND OUTS

Jay-Jay Okocha and **Godwin Okpara** were both left out of the Nigeria squad for the World Cup qualifying second leg against Eritrea because commitments with their club, Paris Saint-Germain, meant they missed the opening tie.

Martin Stranzl, a 19-year-old defender with 1860 Munich, made his debut for Austria in the recent friendly against Sweden.

Uncapped Everton defender **Richard Dunne** was named in the Republic of Ireland squad to face Greece.

PLAYERS STAYING ON

Bayern Munich midfielder **Jens Jeremies** has agreed a three-year extension to his contract, taking him up to 2003. His club-mate, **Stefan Effenberg,** has added a year to his current deal, keeping him at Bayern until June 2002.

Darren Anderton has added a year to his contract with Tottenham.

Real Madrid forward **Jose Manuel Meca**, who began the season in the Real B squad, has signed a four-year contract with the club.

Czech international **Jiri Nemec** has agreed to stay on at Schalke for another year following speculation that he would return to Sparta Prague at the end of this season.

OUT OF ACTION

Leicester forward **Stan Collymore** will not play again until the start of next season after breaking a leg in a League match against Derby.

Also out until the new campaign is Ajax forward **Nikos Machlas**, after undergoing knee surgery.

Missing out...Jay-Jay Okocha

OBITUARIES

Juve hero...Carlo Parola

Carlo Parola

CARLO PAROLA, the powerful and elegant centre-half who won two championships with Juventus, has died aged 78.

He was famous above all for his bicycle-kick, although he did not invent it. Leonidas, the so-called Black Diamond and Brazil's centre-forward in the 1938 World Cup, was a notable practitioner too, though he was not the originator either. But Parola practised it with spectacular success.

It had the effect, he said, of putting an opponent off his stroke, the ball being whipped away from under his nose when he thought he was in control.

Yet Parola's two games against the formidable Tommy Lawton ended in disaster for his team, if not for himself.

At Hampden Park in May 1947, Great Britain beat the Rest of Europe 6-1, with two goals from Lawton and an own goal scored by the unfortunate Parola. A year later, in Turin, Lawton scored again as England thrashed Italy 4-0.

Parola, who was Turin born and bred, worked in the local Fiat factories and was spotted playing for their GS

Fiat club. The wonder of it was that he gained only 10 caps for Italy, his career coming to an abrupt and unhappy close in the 1950 World Cup.

There, in Sao Paulo, the Sweden centre-forward Hans Jeppson, soon to play in Italy, ran him ragged and scored twice, enabling Sweden to win 3-2 and effectively eliminating Italy from the tournament.

In 1954 Parola joined Lazio, but his pace had gone and his last months as a player were a sad anti-climax.

Parola had had an impressive game that day in Glasgow, despite the score, and put all the blame for the own goal on French keeper, Jackie Da Rui. "Not anticipating my intentions, he allowed my very easy pass to escape him."

Brian Glanville

Wilf Mannion

Pass master...Wilf Mannion

WILF MANNION, a smallish but solidly built inside-forward, is still remembered from the great England days of the 1940s. He was primarily a chance-maker, but could take them as well, as demonstrated by a hat-trick in England's first post-war international, a 7-2 away win over Northern Ireland.

Mannion, who has died at 81, added another eight goals in 25 more internationals, but he did not win a single major club honour during his lengthy service with Middlesbrough and Hull City.

He scored exactly 100 League goals in 357 games, and would have had more but for the occasional re-signing dispute at a time when footballers were poorly paid: the sort of argument that no one man could win without support.

David Prole

Moacir Barbosa

MOACIR BARBOSA, the Brazil goalkeeper who was blamed by many for his country's shock defeat by Uruguay in the 1950 World Cup decider, has died in Sao Paulo, aged 79.

He retired from soccer in 1963 and press reports suggest he was getting a pension of only £55 a month when he died.

Speaking earlier this year, Barbosa said the Brazilian people had never forgiven him for his performance against Uruguay, when Alcide Ghiggia scored the decisive goal by slotting the ball between Barbosa's legs 11 minutes from the end.

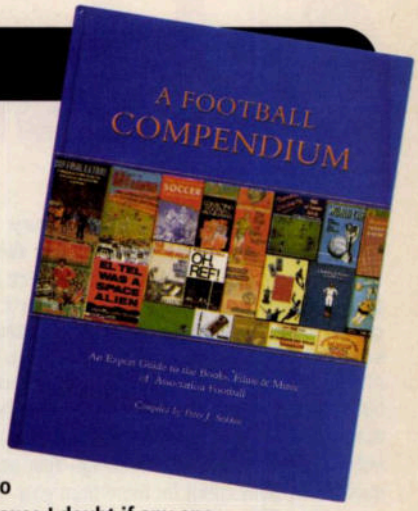
"Brazilian law doesn't permit a sentence of more than 30 years, but I've been in prison for 50 years now," said Barbosa.

Eric Weil

● Former Real Madrid forward Sebastian Fleitas has died at the age of 53. The Paraguayan winger joined Real in 1969 and went on to play almost 60 games for the club.

● Perica Azdic, a 31-year-old Yugoslavian defender with Cypriot First Division side Ethnikos Akhna, was found hanged at his flat after he had failed to turn up for training.

BOOKS



A FOOTBALL COMPENDIUM

Peter J Seddon

(The British Library, £30)

THIS is the second edition of soccer publishing's massive masterwork, with more than 7,000 entries spreading through its 800 pages.

Mr Seddon deserves congratulations from anybody who has used it or is going to do so. I avoid writing "read it" because I doubt if any one person outside the publishing house can read it all: the job would take far too long. But for shorter visits, it could hardly be bettered.

The British Library describes this as "the most complete and authoritative guide to the books, films and music of association football ever to have been published", and there's only one thing wrong with that: it should read "ever to be published" – because surely nobody will undertake a similar task again.

I have not had chance to read it all, nor do I expect to, but I have seen enough to form the impression that if there is something you want to know, this book will tell you.

It has a most comprehensive index, which lists work produced, whether read, watched or listened to, in a concise way that makes good use of the available space: there is plenty of it, but it is not wasted.

There are photographs, some erudite essays on the game, humour, a guide to football collectables...and you even get a bonus. While checking on a friend's output, I discovered that one of his soccer books for children had been translated into a foreign language: Welsh.

I don't think you can get any more comprehensive than that.

David Prole

BRILLIANT ORANGE

David Winner

(Bloomsbury, £14.99)

SIMON KUPER has stood alone for years as the major writer on soccer in Holland, but he now has a rival. David Winner, a freelance writer and translator, has emerged with this fine book, which he has subtitled 'The Neurotic Genius of Dutch Football'.

He covers a quarter of a century and deals with players in various parts of the world as well as in their native country. This makes for interesting journeys interspersed with character assessments, history and anecdotes, several – not surprisingly, with Holland – concerning clashes of personality between major figures.

They certainly have had their share of complex characters with odd bits to match. Cruyff, for instance, who claimed that a certain player's technique was not good and, when asked to explain, replied: "When he kicks the ball, the sound is wrong."

There is also a tale of Maradona's second goal for Argentina against England in the 1986 World Cup, a goal widely accepted as the best ever seen (or shown on TV, which is not the same thing).

Jorge Valdano, who was close to Maradona all the way through his 70-yard run past six defenders, claims that Maradona later told him the initial objective had been to set up Valdano for a shot (he was in the centre of the area, Maradona to his right). "Only when Diego got past the last defender and was bearing down on Shilton did it occur to him that he could score for himself."

This excellent book is full of such nuggets and – at today's prices – is excellent value for money.

David Prole

Golden shot

Andrii Shevchenko, Serie A's leading scorer, talks to Dominique Antognoni about his first season at Milan

WORLD SOCCER: Not every player does well in his first season in Italy – Kluivert and Bergkamp, for example, weren't great successes; so how come this season has gone so well for you?

ANDRII SHEVCHENKO: I can't answer for those two but I will say that in the first season here, the thing that counts most is the way you adapt as an individual to your new surroundings. Your personal qualities actually count for more than your footballing skills when you start out here.

I had quite a lot of difficulties in my first four months but I overcame them by keeping calm. I'm not saying that your football isn't crucial, it's just that not all the greatest players have the mindset or personality that will see them succeed in Italy.

It's said that you're the player who gets the results for Milan. When you don't play, or if you are slightly under par, the team under-performs. Would you agree?

Well, to be honest, I don't really think that's true. I know I have certain talents and abilities, but I'd never say that it's me alone who makes the difference.

That's a very diplomatic answer.

But it really is the case that I don't think in those terms – I think only about playing the game. I think of playing and scoring.

Are you pleased with how your first year here has gone?

Fairly pleased. I score more goals here, which is the most important thing. I say fairly pleased because three things did cast a shadow over the season – being knocked out of the Champions League, failing to win the Italian title, and my national team losing out in the European Championship.

Since Boban's injury, you and Bierhoff have had far fewer chances.

Latterly we had got very used to having Boban behind us – he created the chances. He was the brains of our team, with amazingly creative ideas which he translated into laying on balls for us to score. Now we have to find other routes to goal. That'll take a little time.

How has your game changed since your days at Kyiv Dynamo?

It's changed a lot, above all tactically. At Dynamo, I always had to help out in midfield, while [Milan coach] Zaccheroni only asks me to play an attacking role. So, here, I run around less and I score more.

I never scored this many while I was at Dynamo. But even here, Zaccheroni will sometimes ask me to turn round and help in midfield. That's not a problem, though – I do it happily, and it doesn't tire me out.

What other differences have you noticed here?

The press is different. In Kyiv, I'd talk to a journalist once a month. Here, it's 30 times a day. I'm not saying that I dislike all the attention, it's just that I wasn't prepared for it. The newspapers here are a lot more vocal than the Kyiv press, but you expect that when you play for Milan.

Do you like the way the fans treat you here and are they very different from those in Kyiv?

They're less heated than the Dynamo fans. The good thing is that they tend to keep their distance a little, compared to the fans in Ukraine. Here, they just want a handshake or an autograph.

Let's talk about Rebrov, your attack partner at Kyiv Dynamo.

It's been said that Milan might be interested in buying him.

I don't know anything about that. We talk a lot on the phone but never about that. But I would say that he has the right qualities you need to be in a heavyweight side.

So do you think he's ready for the Italian League? Or would anywhere else suit him?

I think he's ready for Italy, or for an English team.

What is the biggest difference between the Ukrainian and Italian Leagues?

In the Ukraine, the League is just a preparation for the Champions League. Here, every game is a killer. They always demand your very best – and then some.

Which was your best game this season?

The game against Lazio, when I scored three goals.

And your best goal?

Against Bari. I dribbled the length of the field, into the penalty box, and scored.

Your best goal ever?

In the Ukrainian Cup Final against Karpaty Lviv.

Can we talk a little about Euro 2000?

No, I don't even want to think about it.

Is that because being knocked out still hurts you?

Yes, I still think about the missed chances against France in Paris. I don't even know if I'm going to be able to watch the Euro 2000 games on TV.

Why did Ukraine fail to qualify?

We lacked international experience.

THE RACE FOR EUROPE'S GOLDEN SHOE

AT PRESS time, Shevchenko was Serie A's joint leading scorer, with Parma's **Hernan Crespo**, on 21 goals from 30 matches.

However, the winner of this season's top scorer award in Europe is likely to come from England, Holland or Portugal.

Sunderland's **Kevin Phillips** has had a remarkable first season in the English Premiership, scoring 27 goals in 33 matches. That puts him well clear of **Alan Shearer** and **Andy Cole**, both on 19.

PSV striker **Ruud Van Nistelrooy** may not get a chance to add to his tally of 29, having suffered a knee injury last month, so the most likely recipient of the Golden Shoe is last season's winner, **Mario Jardel** of FC Porto, on 32 goals and counting after 30 matches.

Jardel is often criticised for scoring the bulk of his goals against weak teams in the Portuguese League. But this season, in addition to his League tally, the Brazilian has been the leading scorer in the UEFA Champions League. He took his European total to nine after scoring in the first leg of the quarter-final against Bayern Munich.

In France, **Sonny Anderson** and **David Trezeguet** were both on 20 goals after 31 games, while Norwegian **Ole-Martin Arst** of Gent has been setting the pace in Belgium with 27 in 31 matches, ahead of Westerlo's **Toni Brogno** (24).

Front man...Jardel

In Germany, **Martin Max**'s 16 goals from 30 games have helped take 1860 Munich into the UEFA Cup places.

Spare a thought for **Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink**. He leads the Spanish scoring charts, jointly with **Salva** (Santander) and **Catanha** (Malaga), on 23 from 33 matches – but Atletico's poor form could result in him being the first Liga top scorer to suffer relegation.

Do you think it's right that players will arrive at Euro 2000 having just played 60 or 70 games?
No, I don't. Players today have such a tough time of it. But I don't really see how it could be done differently.

Which national side has impressed you the most?
France.

Are there any Ukrainian players whom you could recommend to Italian managers?
Well, as you know, most of them play for Kyiv Dynamo. Hmm, let's see – there's Vladyslav Vaschuk, the central defender. And you've already seen Kaladze in action.

I'm curious to know why you've taken a house in the middle of Milan, and not out in the suburbs where all the other players head for.
That's because I wanted my parents to be close to town, and also there is a large park very nearby, which is great for them. My folks have been a great help to me in my first year here. Also, from my point of view, my home is close to the club.

Were you pleased to have been voted third in the 1999 European Player of the Year poll?
It was right that I came third, what with Milan being knocked out of the Champions League and Ukraine being knocked out of Euro 2000. [Poll winner] Rivaldo is absolutely the best.

These days, it seems players change teams almost every year. What do you make of this?
I was at Kyiv Dynamo for 13 years and now I would like to stay as long at Milan. I don't like change – not even if it involves a great deal of money. I'd like to stay here, and become almost a symbol of Milan – as Maldini has done.

Who's going to win the scudetto?
Juve. They've got the advantage over Lazio, who have got the burden of playing the Italian Cup Final as well as Champions League games. They'll get tired out.

Will Milan qualify for next season's Champions League?
We must. For a club of this stature, it would be terrible if we didn't. The shame would be hard to bear.

What must Milan do to re-establish their dominance in Serie A and Europe?
We need to have luck – that's all.

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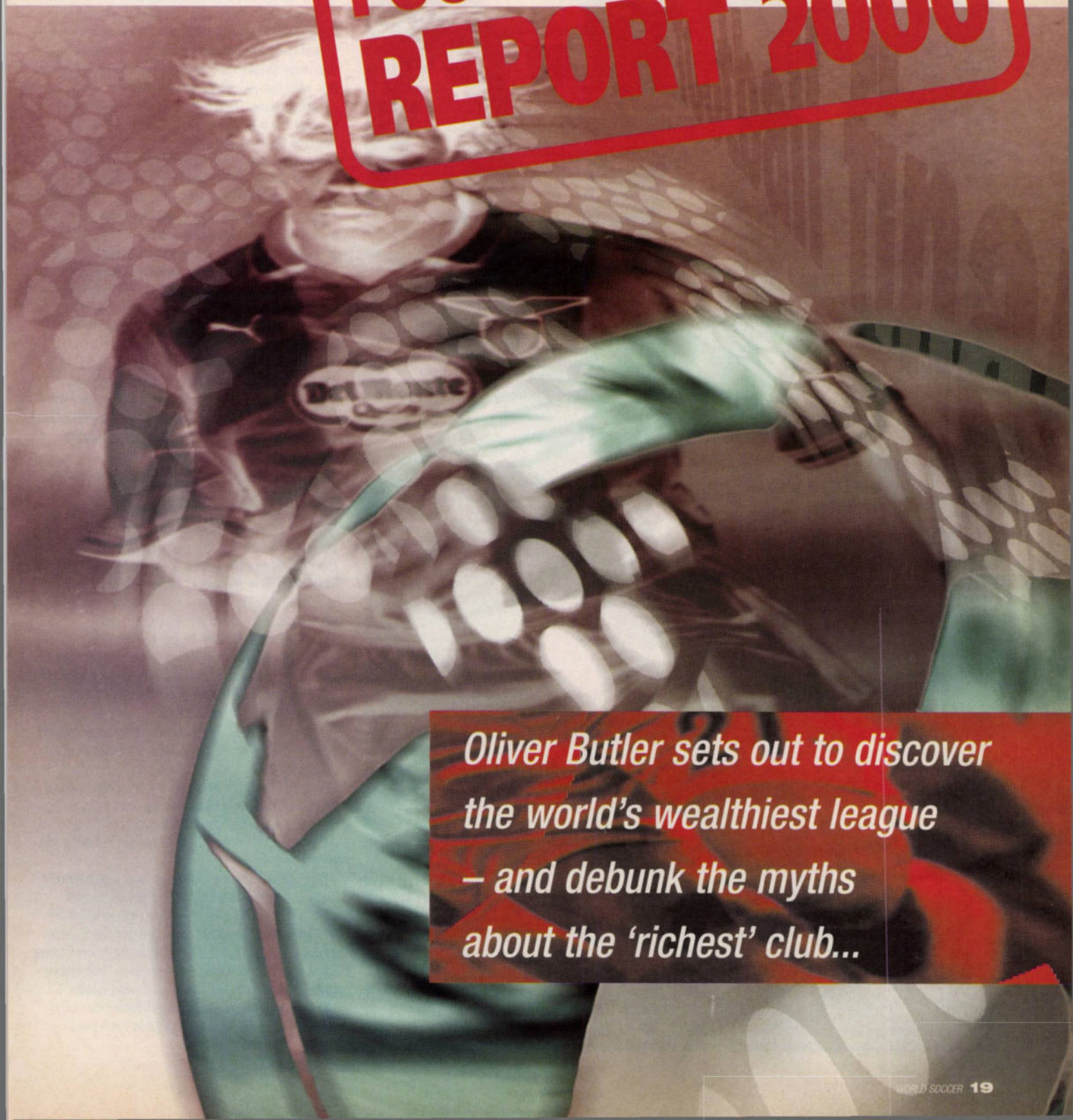
FOOTBALL WEALTH REPORT 2000



Oliver Butler sets out to discover the world's wealthiest league – and debunk the myths about the 'richest' club...

FOOTBALL WEALTH REPORT 2000

In the money...Lazio could offer Marcelo Salas the best deal

OVER THE LAST year, hardly anyone in the world could have ignored the coverage given to Manchester United and the labels put on them: 'Biggest Club in the World' or 'Richest Club in the World'. Along with this has come labels for the Premier League as not only the 'Best League in the World' or the Most Exciting, but also the Richest.

However, while it appears that the Premier League has the greatest amount of money going in and out of the hands of its clubs in one season, our study shows that it would be wrong to equate this with the wealth of its members.

Manchester United fans would feel justified to ask how it is that Lazio could afford to buy Marcelo Salas at the end of the 1997-98 season when Lazio's turnover was less than half of Manchester United's, which was the highest in the world at £87.9million. How is it that, in a survey conducted by *World Soccer* in November 1999, the most highly paid footballers were in Italy, Spain and Germany, rather than in the Premier League?

The answer lies not in looking at just how much money comes through the club, but how much of that money is then diverted into other areas. Supporters are most concerned with the wealth of their club in relation to how much it can spend on resources for the playing side, on attracting players to the club or paying players already on the books sufficient to keep them there.

We have found that clubs on the continent, and especially in Serie A, have a distinct advantage over their English counterparts in terms of 'Player Purchasing Power' (PPP) – the funds available to spend on new team members.

As a result they are able to spend more in order to attract the best players in the world. Therefore, while Manchester United may have the highest turnover, they are not necessarily the 'richest' club in the world in terms of PPP. And while the Premier League may have the highest turnover of all Europe's leagues, it is not necessarily the 'richest' in the world.

We have not attempted to give a value to PPP and judge clubs accordingly because such work is too complex, and to compare clubs in different leagues would be misleading.

However, it is clear from recent transfer market activity that Manchester United are struggling to attain the same level of superiority in terms of PPP that they have at revenue gathering. In other words, United have more money coming in than a team like Lazio, Italy's richest club according to our data. But they do not channel as much money out on players.

For this study, we looked at how much money clubs in the top five European leagues turned over last season or, where these figures were not available, their estimated budgets for this season. In the cases of England and Germany, figures taken have been for turnover – the revenue received by clubs in a season. For the Spanish and Italian Leagues, estimated club budgets have been used because complete turnover figures have been

unavailable. As clubs budget in a conservative manner, these estimated budgets may present lower sums than actual turnover, but do not differ significantly to affect the overall picture.

When looking at these figures as a whole and as an average, the superiority of English clubs' finances stands out. This is due to a number of factors. Primary among them is the high level of revenue Premier League clubs receive in gate receipts. The Taylor Report in the aftermath of the Hillsborough tragedy not only improved safety at Premiership grounds, but it also helped to drive up prices and so gate revenues for the clubs. All-seat stadia excused higher prices for better facilities; these rises were supported and even further buoyed by the boom in the popularity of the game in the 1990s, which meant that demand for tickets exceeded supply. A look at the graph overleaf (page 22) demonstrates that Manchester United's gate receipts have been twice those of Lazio in 1999 and 2000.

> 'Man United may have more money coming in than Lazio, but they do not channel as much money out on players'

It also demonstrates the higher level of merchandising received by Man U compared to Lazio, a trend that is replicated throughout the UK if not to the extent of the United example. English clubs have led the way in merchandising over the past decade and have been generating revenues other European clubs could not dream of (for example, last year Marseille received about £2.5m from merchandising, while Tottenham received £3.6m), even if sales have been flagging recently. Premier League teams have also exploited catering and corporate hospitality, services that are non-existent on the continent.

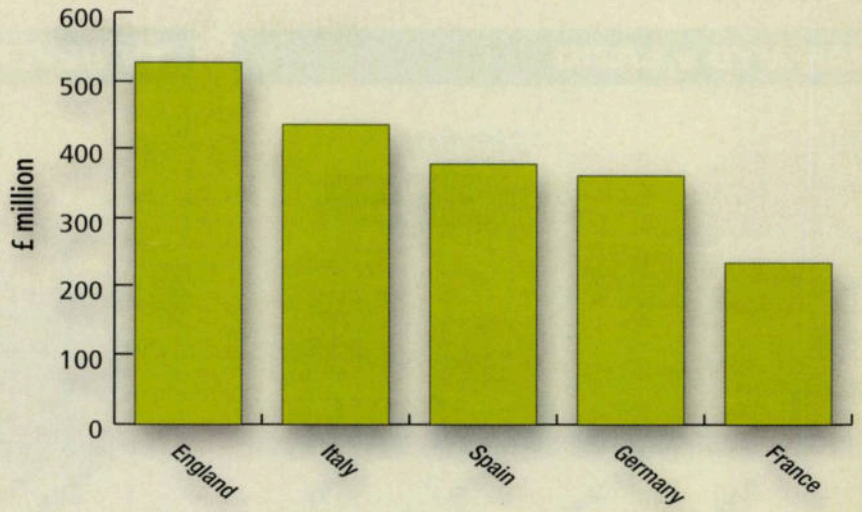
The greater streams of income that English clubs enjoy in comparison to their European counterparts, together with a comparatively valuable TV deal, have meant that the Premier League receives the most money of the top five leagues. So how is it that the Premiership clubs are losing out in the PPP stakes?

We must not forget that while people coming through the turnstile, buying replica kits or quaffing wine in an executive box all generate revenue for the clubs, it also costs money to set up these sources of revenue. For every person going through the turnstile, a cut of that ticket price will go towards paying the person who took the stub, towards the people stewarding, towards the management of the stadium, which belongs to the club. For every kit sold, money is paid for manufacture, distribution etc. For every glass of wine drunk, people are paid to serve it. In short, the club must pay to achieve the increase in revenue, and with merchandising, stadium management, catering etc, the profit margins are not so high.

On the continent, especially among the biggest clubs, such costs are lower. These clubs do not own their stadia, but instead lease them from the council and therefore need only pay rent and offer a cut of their gate receipts in return. And while levels of merchandising are much lower for continental clubs, they can increase profit margins by licensing out their merchandising to third parties.

TOP FIVE LEAGUE TOTAL BUDGETS 1999-00*

*estimated

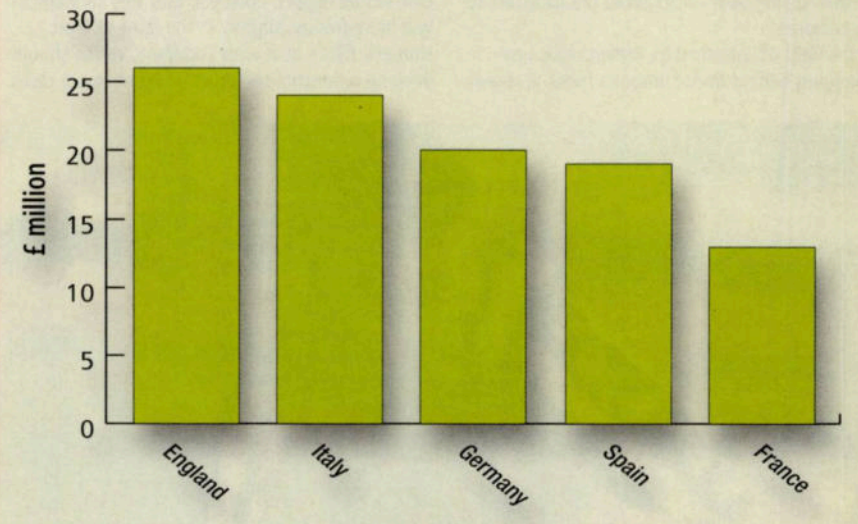


The Premier League has more money to spend than its European rivals, but English clubs also have higher overheads and outgoings.

Source: Soccer Investor

TOP FIVE LEAGUE AVERAGE BUDGETS 1999-00*

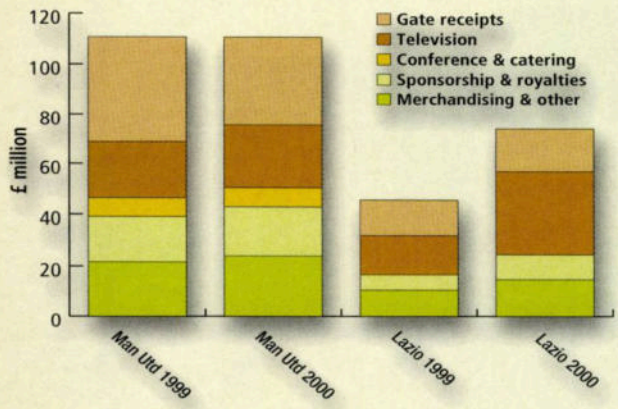
*estimated



Even with a 20-team Premier League, English clubs have more to spend on average than their counterparts on the Continent.

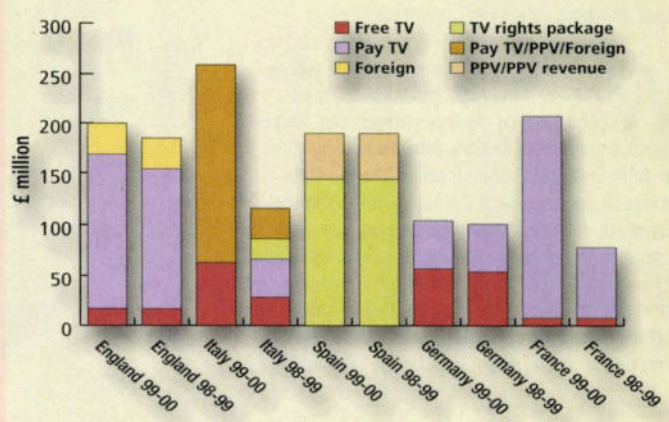
Source: Soccer Investor

MAN UTD v LAZIO



In a comparison of revenue, Manchester United receive almost double that of Lazio, Italy's 'richest' club, but the Italians still spend more on buying and paying players.
Source: Soccer Investor

TV REVENUES 1998-2000



Italy and France have leapfrogged England in the TV revenue stakes, with Spain not far behind, while Germany has the lowest income of the five.
Source: Soccer Investor

Clubs on the continent receive most of their income, outside of gate receipts, in the fields of sponsorship and broadcasting revenue. These areas present much higher margins of profit than gate receipts, merchandising or catering. It costs little to set up advertising deals or to allow broadcasters to set up cameras.

In the field of sponsorship, British clubs have been lagging behind their European rivals. A recent study by German market research company Sport + Markt found that the average sponsorship deal in England was 1.5m euros (£900,000), similar to France, where football is less popular, but more than 50 per cent lower than in Germany and Spain. One would expect, however, that this imbalance will be redressed slightly in the light of Man United's £30m deal with Vodafone, which should become a benchmark for other Premiership clubs.

Out in front...Alessandro Del Piero is the world's highest paid player

Since the 1990s, TV income has become the greatest driving force behind the growth of money within the game. As more and more commercial media companies have realised the worth of football in guaranteeing consistently high audience figures and as pay-TV operators have realised the worth of exclusive rights to live football in terms of boosting subscriptions to their stations, so TV income has soared throughout the decade.

The effect of this increase in revenue on the spending power of clubs has been restricted by the centralisation of TV rights by the respective leagues. This has meant that the more popular clubs have not been able to receive all of the TV revenue they have generated for the sake of equitable distribution among themselves and their smaller rivals.

As the game enters the 21st century, the leagues are coming under more and more pressure from the bigger clubs to allow them to receive this income directly for some TV rights, if not all.

Such pressure has been successful in Italy and Spain, but has yet to happen in England, France and Germany, where rights remain centrally managed. When clubs negotiate individually, not only does the total amount of TV revenue for the League increase dramatically, but the clubs' revenue increases too. This happened in Spain from the 1996-97 season whereby total TV revenue for La Liga quadrupled, with even the smallest clubs tripling their revenue.

The same outcome resulted in Italy, as can be seen by comparing Serie A TV revenues for 1998-99 with those for this season. Clubs have been able to negotiate with the two competing pay-TV platforms, Telepiu and Stream, and, in the case of the top teams, have been able to at least double revenues over the season before. Juventus and Milan have received £31.3m for their domestic TV rights this season, more than Manchester United are predicted to receive in total TV revenue this

year, including money from the lucrative Champions League. This system has benefited all Serie A teams, but of course it is the top six that have benefited the most.

Italian clubs can then use such income to attract the best players by tempting them away from other clubs with better salaries. In turn, these players' original clubs cannot refuse the prices offered for them. Indeed, one can almost see the link between the purchase of such high-profile players by the top six Italian teams and the PPV market. In attracting an all-star line-up a high cost is paid, but some of this money is recouped by the extra subscriptions to your televised games that will be made as a result of this player trading. It is no coincidence that the world record transfer (Christian Vieri, £31m) took place between two Italian teams (Lazio and Inter), nor that Juve's Alessandro Del Piero was found to be the world's highest paid player in *World Soccer's* survey of wages in November 1999.

Therefore, the new Premier League TV deal that has just been put to tender is important not just in terms of the amount of money it can generate from the bidding media companies, but also in how that money is then distributed to the clubs. The Premier League is caught between trying to maintain a competitive balance among the 20 clubs through equitable distribution of TV revenue, while at the same time keeping a competitive balance between its top teams and other leading European clubs.

Such a dilemma, of course, also faces most other European leagues. It is true of both Germany and France, where the bigger, more popular clubs have brought increasing pressure on their leagues to increase TV revenues and cede more rights to them.

In Germany, much of the clubs' income has come from gate receipts and then merchandising and sponsorship. TV has contributed little despite Germany having 22.2m 14 to 65-year-olds who are interested in football, the second highest number in Europe (England had 22.4m and Italy 20.6m). It also has a higher take-up of cable TV than comparable markets. This season the Bundesliga will receive TV revenue of £105m, the lowest of the top five leagues.

> 'The greater streams of income that English clubs enjoy have meant that the Premier League receives the most money of the top five leagues'

High price...but Barça can afford Rivaldo

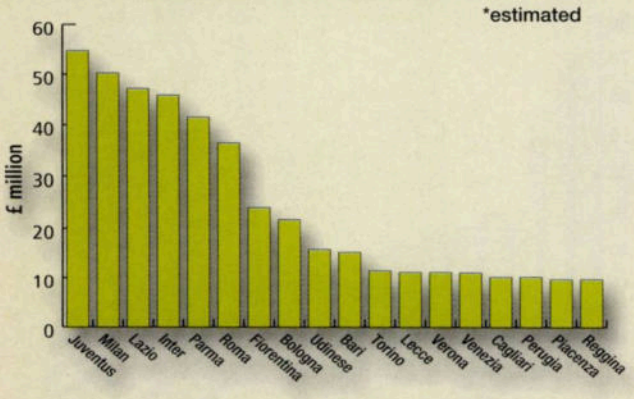
Even if reports are true of Germany's top-flight clubs securing an improved £500m deal over the next three seasons, that works out at around £160m a year, which still leaves them bottom of the pile. Despite this, top-level pay for Bundesliga players remains greater than for those in France and England, according to the *World Soccer* survey.

Where German clubs have been struggling has been in the level of transfer fees, with only the likes of Bayern Munich and Borussia Dortmund really able to compete for big signings with Spanish, English and Italian clubs.

This has also been true of French clubs, who have experienced a constant drain of their best (and even mediocre) talent to richer, foreign clubs since the early 1990s. While this factor might have helped the French national team win the World Cup in 1998, the clubs were unhappy as they struggled to emulate the national team's global success on a European scale.

During the 1990s Canal Plus gained complete control over the French football TV market, to the extent that TV revenue was easily the lowest among the big five leagues. The pressure put on the French National League (LNF) by the leading clubs to increase this income forced the LNF to start negotiations for its TV rights for

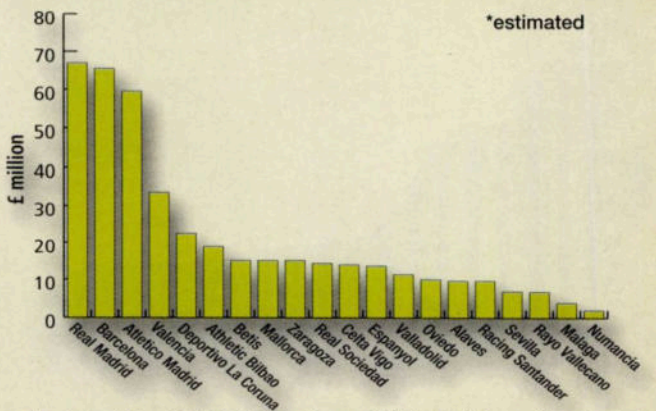
ITALIAN CLUB BUDGETS 99-00*



Serie A's 'big six' – Juventus, Milan, Lazio, Inter, Parma and Roma – dominate the Italian figures, a situation that will be accentuated by future TV deals.

Source: Soccer Investor

SPANISH CLUB BUDGETS 99-00*



The dominant trio of Real Madrid, Barcelona and Atletico Madrid are millions ahead of their rivals in La Liga. Only Valencia look like challenging them.

Source: Soccer Investor

FOOTBALL WEALTH REPORT 2000

2001-4 a year early. The massive increase obtained was a result of the emergence of competition to Canal Plus in the form of digital channel TPS, and although the revenues were for rights from 2001, the LNF has been keen to placate the clubs with a twofold increase in TV revenues from this season.

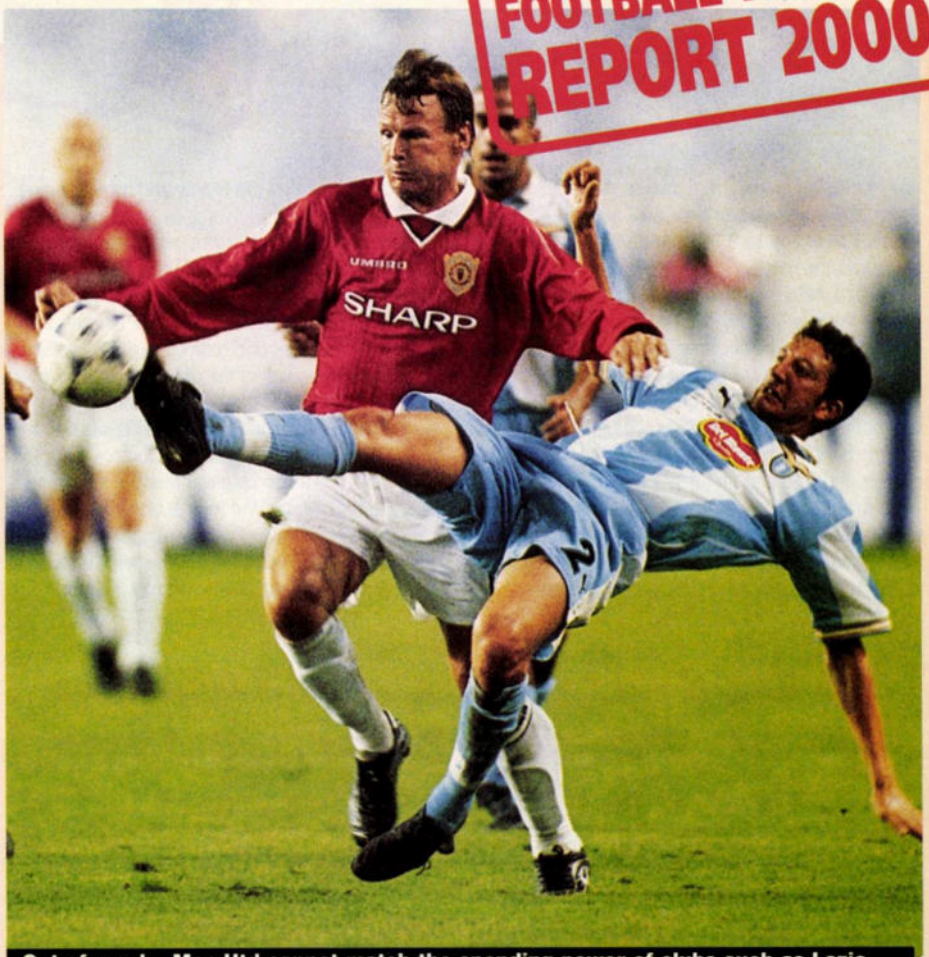
Last summer the promise of this extra money led to record transfer dealings for the French market as players like Sonny Anderson joined the LNF and there was the rare sight of Frenchmen returning from abroad. But even this improvement has not been enough for the leading 12 clubs, who have now called for a change to the distribution method which would allow them a greater share of the pie.

In Spain the distribution of the Primera Liga's wealth is very lopsided, since, as the graph on page 23 shows, Atletico Madrid, Barcelona and Real Madrid have got the lion's share. Those three clubs have also won all the championships since 1984.

The gap between the PPP of Barcelona and Real Madrid and their domestic competitors has widened even further over the past year because these clubs have signed record deals with rival TV companies. Barça signed a deal, to run from 2003-08, worth £49m a season (including Champions League rights); Real soon rivalled this by reaching a £30m-a-season domestic rights only agreement.

These deals have not only guaranteed Real and Barça a prosperous future from 2003, but they also enrich the clubs now and until then by paying an annual retainer on top of the money received from current TV rights agreements. In Barcelona's case, this retainer amounts to some £6.1m a season, close to the £6.45m Chelsea received from the Premiership for its TV rights last season.

Such deals will not only further polarise Spanish football in terms of wealth, but they also provide a means for the beneficiaries to build up debt financed by such future earning streams. The issue of debt has recently brought much scrutiny to bear on both Barça and, to an even larger extent, Real Madrid. Only last month, one Spanish newspaper claimed that Real had debts of £62m.

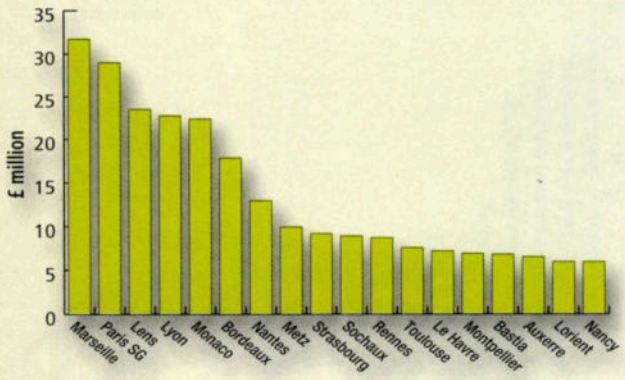


Out of reach...Man Utd cannot match the spending power of clubs such as Lazio

So, is it right to call clubs wealthy when they spend lots of somebody else's money on players? To this extent the likes of Manchester United, with no major creditors, are certainly in a much healthier financial position than clubs with debts. But, on the other hand, it is sometimes necessary to borrow in order to speculate in order to accumulate, especially in player trading. It is really all down to whether the club's debt is serviceable (i.e. the interest can be paid on it) and eventually repayable. This is a matter for the clubs and their creditors.

The debt issue also relates to other European clubs, especially in Italy, where they often have generous credit deals with financial institutions. Continental clubs have an advantage over their English counterparts in their ability to obtain favourable terms as a result of the more complex political and cultural links with financial institutions

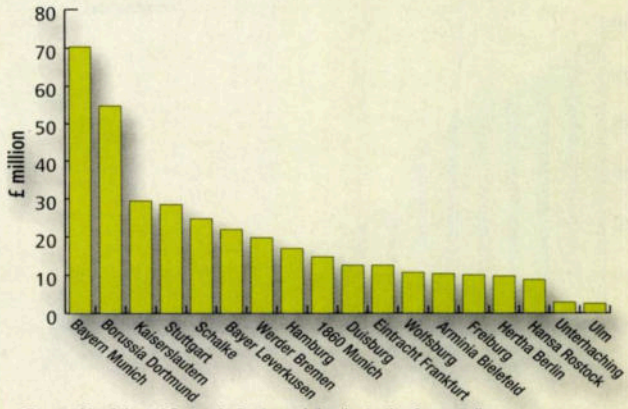
FRENCH CLUB BUDGETS 98-99



As expected, Marseille and PSG are France's 'wealthiest' clubs, but it is by no means a two-team race.

Source: Soccer Investor

GERMAN CLUB TURNOVERS 98-99



Bayern Munich and Borussia Dortmund dominate the German figures, a trend which is likely to increase in years to come.

Source: Soccer Investor

> 'The centralisation of TV rights by the leagues has meant that the more popular clubs have not been able to receive all the revenue they have generated'

and society that they have. Increasingly in England, clubs are beginning to view debt financing as a means of obtaining extra income, but such money is being spent on stadium and property development.

So, this is the situation at present. But how will the comparative wealth of clubs change? Over the next few years a degree of convergence can be expected among the larger clubs in Europe in respect of the way their revenue is streamed. This development would take place if a threatened breakaway 'Superleague' occurred. In this scenario, the member clubs would be locked into the same TV revenue streams. But even if this did not happen, convergence is on the horizon.

In England, the new TV deal in place from 2001 will bring the clubs probably twice as much money as before, plus extra revenues from the use of highlights footage on their club channels. These increases will be offset by falls in gate receipts caused by more fans staying at home to watch the games and, as a result, the clubs being forced to review their ticketing price structure (Aston Villa have already reduced some prices this season and Tottenham have frozen season ticket prices for 2000-01).

The merchandising downturn is unlikely to be reversed, but clubs can look forward to greater sponsorship revenue in the wake of the Man Utd-Vodafone deal.

This convergence will also occur outside England as many clubs are influenced by the English model of club structure. Already Lazio have floated on the Milan stock exchange and are due to be followed by Roma. Such clubs, with Milan and Inter waiting in the wings, wish to be able to gain increasing control over their streams of revenue in the future, in order to satisfy their shareholders. It is for these reasons that Lazio and Juventus have talked of having their own stadia while Milan and Inter wish to manage San Siro.

The desire to become a plc is also prevalent among German and Spanish clubs, and from 2002 we could see a number in these countries adopting similar practices to those in England as a result of floating.

Plc or not, most clubs around Europe have already taken the lessons of English clubs' merchandising to heart and are now exploiting this market, to the extent that it is a growing source of revenue for them while it remains stagnant for Premier League outfits.

What has not been touched upon is the impact of the internet on clubs' wealth. Only in March did we see Manchester United's share price soar over 400p, valuing the club at £1bn, after research predicted the club's website alone was worth £300m – as much as standalone Net companies such as Sports Internet. The valuation of the club on the stock market was of no relevance to its spending power, but the reasoning behind the recommendation to buy the shares was important not only to Manchester United.

What may be true for United is true for other Premiership clubs to a lesser extent, but it is true to a similar level for clubs the size and with the popularity of Bayern Munich, Juventus and Barça. Furthermore, through the internet, such clubs will be able to access their global fan base much more easily without the need for end-of-season tours or branded chain stores in far-flung corners of the globe.

Manchester United may have a head start over the others in terms of the commercial side of the internet industry, but such is the speed of development in this field that it will not be long before the other clubs will be right behind.

For this reason, as the internet breaks down international borders and infrastructural barriers, and helps to standardise major clubs' streams of revenue, so the wealth of clubs will become more reflective of how popular they actually are on a global scale.

Oliver Butler is editor of Soccer Investor

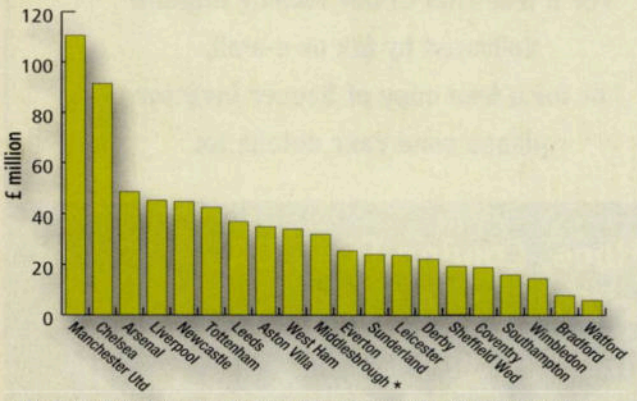
What about the rest?

WHILE concentrating on the top five leagues in Europe, one must not neglect those further down the rankings. For it is here where the most radical change in European football could well be seen.

A comparison of the budgets of the leading clubs in Belgium, Holland, Portugal and Scotland with those of the top five leagues shows clearly why representatives of these clubs have met up to discuss ideas with a view to forming a 'Sixth League' (aka Atlantic League, Euro-League).

The TV markets of these leagues are too small to be able to generate TV revenues along the lines of the top five leagues. It is only by combining their TV markets that they can then enjoy similar levels of TV income and so compete at a similar level to clubs such as Manchester United, Lazio and Bayern Munich.

ENGLISH CLUB TURNOVERS 98-99

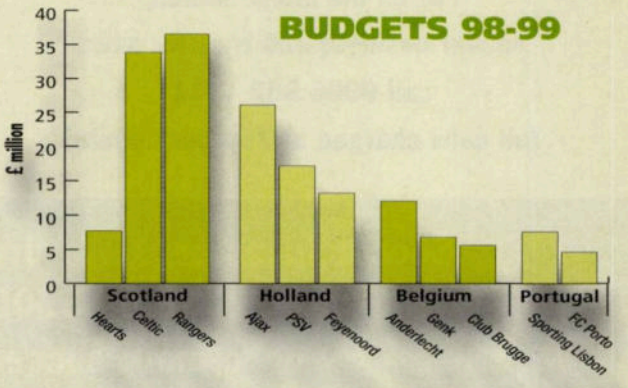


Man United have the highest turnover of any English club, with Chelsea not far behind. The rest have all benefited from an equal share of TV revenue.

*estimated

Source: Soccer Investor

ATLANTIC LEAGUE CANDIDATES



Only the biggest two or three clubs in Scotland, Holland, Belgium and Portugal can compete with clubs in Europe's top five leagues.

Source: Soccer Investor

Soccer Investor

The Boardroom Bible

Soccer Investor

Issue Eight

Men U & FA Cup · Bundesliga · MLS · News · Annuals

All set for the Premier League rights battle

There is a growing awareness among the clubs that an exclusive deal might not maximise the value of their product.

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The men who matter

Edwin Van der Sar

Klaas-Jan Droppert on Holland's undisputed number one

EVERYBODY knows that you can't win a tournament as big as the European Championship without having a reliable and self-confident goalkeeper. But many of the Euro 2000 contenders have struggled to find one – co-hosts Belgium, Germany, Norway, Spain and Yugoslavia are all still looking for the right person.

But there are no such problems for Holland – Edwin Van der Sar, currently riding high with Juventus in Serie A, is the undisputed number one of the past, the present and the future.

His international debut was less than auspicious. Taking the place of previous first choice Ed De Goey for a June 1995 European Championship qualifier away to Belarus, it was Van der Sar's mistake that allowed Sergei Gerasimets to score the only goal of the game.

But since those nervy early days, the former Ajax man has consistently shown coolness and outstanding form for Holland.

The keeper's big break at club level came in 1989 when at amateur team Noordwijk. His coach, Ruud Brring, tipped off his friend Louis Van Gaal about Van der Sar. The then Ajax boss was impressed by what he saw and soon the goalkeeper was on his way to Amsterdam.

He had to wait for his chance to make his breakthrough, but when Stanley Menzo made a couple of mistakes during a UEFA Cup quarter-final against Auxerre in 1993, it was Van der Sar's turn to show his class. Since then, he hasn't looked back.

The keeper was a key figure during Ajax's mid-1990s glory days, when the team won the Champions League and World Club Cup. But their success couldn't last for ever, especially with so many players moving abroad. Van der Sar stayed on but was soon the only key national team player still performing in the Dutch League. And last summer he decided it was time to move on too.

Manchester United wanted to sign him as the successor to Peter Schmeichel, but Van der Sar had different ideas and went to Juventus instead. "I chose Italy because I like to learn the customs of another country and there isn't much difference between England and Holland. But that doesn't mean I don't like the Premier League. I still think it's a fantastic competition.

"The most important thing was to sign for a top club....and Juventus are one of Europe's big teams."

Van der Sar, the best 'footballing' goalkeeper in the world, has settled in quickly in Italy. His form for Juve has ensured that the team had conceded just 16 goals after 28 rounds of Serie A, 10 fewer than the next best sides defensively.

However, there are differences between the Italian and Dutch style of goalkeeping. "In Holland the beauty of the game is as important as the result," says Van der Sar. "So defenders and goalkeepers should do more than only stopping opponents. In Italy, however, this quality is far less important. The only thing that matters is winning."

Even so, he says Juve have now taken note of his ability on the ball. "At first they only wanted me to hammer the ball into the stands when things became hectic. Now they know I can play football better than the average goalkeeper and they are trying to take advantage of it."

The 29-year-old says there is still much for him to learn in Italy. "In Holland I knew all the habits of the strikers – who was a fast shooter, where they positioned themselves, that kind of thing. At Juventus I have to find it out all over again."

No player is perfect. According to a study by *Gazzetta dello Sport*, the Dutchman is troubled by high crosses. The keeper has also been short on luck in the three most important penalty shoot-outs he's been involved in, ending up on the losing side in the 1996 Champions League Final for Ajax against his current club, and for Holland in the Euro 96 quarter-final against France and World Cup 98 semi-final against Brazil.

But Van der Sar's renowned ability to display coolness under pressure will be invaluable to Holland, who seem sure to go into Euro 2000 as favourites.

"Of course I feel pressure, just like anybody else," says the keeper. "But it's about the way you cope with it. I'm usually quiet while other players are more lively. But I still can't sleep when I concede goals that shouldn't be scored.

"With the tournament nearing, the pressure will grow; it's getting exciting. It's true that many players are still involved in winning major prizes with their clubs, but we do talk about Euro 2000. When we are together we only have the national team on our mind."

At least being a Juventus goalkeeper is a good omen. Two of the Italian national team's four major prizes were collected with a goalkeeper of *La Vecchia Signora* between the posts. In 1934 Gianpiero Combi led his team to the World Cup, and 48 years later Dino Zoff did the same. That was Zoff's second major international prize, having also won the European Championship in 1968, though when a Napoli player.

"It's nice to hear that," says Van der Sar of the Juve connection. "Zoff was a top-class keeper for more than two decades. Winning the World Cup at the age of 40 is a remarkable performance. I don't think I'll be there when I'm that old, but I can still continue for a long time."

Cool customer...Edwin Van der Sar

Fact file

Country Holland
Club Juventus (Ita)
Born October 29, 1970, in Voorhout
Previous clubs Foreholte, Noordwijk, Ajax
International debut June 1995, v Belarus
International caps 44 caps (0 gls)
Honours Champions League 1995 (Ajax); World Club Cup 1995; European Super Cup 1995; Dutch League 1994, 1995, 1996, 1998; Dutch Cup 1993, 1998, 1999

The men who matter

Paulo Sousa

The Portugal midfielder tells Dominique Antognoni why the time is right for his team to find success

WORLD SOCCER: How do you feel about playing in the European Championship when you've just played 60 or 70 matches?
PAULO SOUSA: I was in the same situation four years ago. After winning the Champions League with Juventus, I went to England and had a good championship, despite a few physical problems. But the real problem is that there is always less time to prepare for internationals – it's harder for us all to get together to train. But it all depends on the individual, on how each man finds his own motivation and resources.

How do you feel about Euro 2000?
I always react well under pressure, and I seem to play better if there are problems to overcome and responsibilities to deal with. I'm currently in very good shape physically, I'm psychologically up for it, and I think I've just had probably the best year of my recent career. I've played a lot, I haven't suffered injuries, and I feel good in myself.

There have been some problems at Parma, and with Inter you had a pretty unfortunate year last season. These things can affect international performance, can't they?
Absolutely not – club performance and national performance are two very different things. It's important to make a clear distinction. If I can talk for a little while about national games – there is very little time to train together and this could actually be an advantage for us, because we love to play, not to train.

What are Portugal's plans for Euro 2000?
We want to play really well, and to enjoy ourselves and be entertaining to watch as well. We've already proved that we play a spectacular game. Our group is a very tough one, so we have to concentrate on getting through. If we do, our self-confidence will be terrific and that's when anything becomes possible. If we get out of our group alive, if we're not beaten by Germany or England, then I don't see that we have anyone else to fear. If we beat them, we can beat them all.

What are the people of Portugal expecting from the team?
I'll tell you what we have been telling our fans: don't have too many illusions. Remember four years ago? Everybody was thinking big after we had played some great games in the first round. Then, against the Czech Republic, we lost when it looked like we would easily win. We really don't want a repeat of that.

But with such great players as Paulo Sousa, Rui Costa, Luis Figo and Vitor Baia your team can't be anything other than a strong one.
Listen, everything we four have won, we've won with our club sides, not the national side. This time we must carry our experience into the national team, to achieve something important at this level too. As national players, we haven't achieved anything, and this is a great opportunity for us to do that. The 2002 World Cup will give us another chance. That's two very important events coming up, and we're all at the peak of our careers – it's really going to be the moment of truth.

What kind of Portugal side are we going to see at Euro 2000?
A compact team, playing good football – we create lots of scoring chances but we do make mistakes under pressure. We will play with our usual formation, with the only changes being in the midfield: sometimes we'll play with one in the centre, sometimes with two – it depends on the type of team we are playing. If the opposition is strong, we'll use two. But we still have a problem with our attack.

And you tend to over-elaborate.
Exactly! We don't have a strong attacker, someone we can direct balls towards. So what happens? We have to get into a striking position using lateral passes and the build-up becomes very slow. We can make 10 passes before getting a shot in – that's too many in today's game.

What kind of coach is Humberto Coelho?
He was the indisputable leader at Benfica in the 1970s and 80s, and he has brought that kind of leadership to the national side. He keeps us calm and steady. The type of player you were determines what kind of coach you become.

Is it true there have been internal problems at the Portuguese federation? Or has it all been sorted out?
There used to be elections every year – one person was elected president, got a project off the ground, then another president was elected the following year and it all had to start from scratch again. So nothing was ever followed through to completion. Now it's changed and the president lasts for two consecutive sessions, and results are starting to show.

Who are some of the younger Portuguese players who could make their mark at Euro 2000?
Beto, Sporting Lisbon's central defender, and [his club-mate] Delfim. Also, Hugo Leal, though he's had some problems at Atletico Madrid and I'm not sure how such a young player will cope at the European Championship.

What was your view of the qualifying campaign?
We took a step backwards during our qualification games – we struggled quite hard in a fairly easy group. We didn't come top, so we're still far from being a truly great team.

However, you did qualify as the best runners-up...
From that point of view, you could

Fact file

Country Portugal
Club Parma (Ita)
Born August 30, 1970, in Viseu
Previous clubs Academica Viseu, Benfica, Sporting Lisbon, Juventus (Ita), Borussia Dortmund (Ger), Internazionale (Ita)
International debut January 1991, v Spain
International caps 42 (0 goals)
Honours Champions League 1996 (Juventus), 1997 (Dortmund); World Club Cup 1997 (Dortmund); Portuguese League 1991 (Benfica); Italian League 1995 (Juventus); Italian Cup 1995

say that we realised our objective – to qualify without going through a play-off. But we're not consistent – we have moments when we play magnificently, and others when we are not so good.

You lost to Romania at home.
What a match! They scored in the 90th minute. We had so many chances but couldn't score, and we made mistakes. Romania defend brilliantly and they know that sooner or later a chance to score will come. And because they've got players up front as good as Ilie, for example, they can really punish you. Their defence is amazing in the way it is organised: it's not just the individuals, it's the whole team who are called on to defend.

Adrian Mutu has appeared a number of times for Inter and was recently called up by Romania. What do you make of him?
He's very ambitious, he has many good qualities and in a few years, if he keeps working hard, he'll be even better than Ilie. It's right that he's had an international call-up, he's playing in the toughest League in the world.

How do you rate Germany?
They're going through some difficulties at the moment. I don't know how they'll cope with the transition from being an ageing side to one with younger players, but whatever happens, they are always very determined. In moments of crisis they always seem able to pull themselves round. And then they compete like crazy.

What about England?
They are difficult to play against because their game is unpredictable. We are not used to playing them. We prefer a slick, fast, technical style, but their aerial game and physical strength can really make us suffer. Those high balls are always a killer.

Up for it...Paulo Sousa believes he's in good shape for Euro 2000

You know the Italian game well. How do you rate their national side?
The Italians are the best at preparing for a game – in terms of tactics and organisation. I've watched them closely. But they don't have a lot of time to work together as a national side, and they're not happy about that, because their tactical teamwork can suffer as a result. The Italian national side do not play well, yet the Italian club teams are brilliant and do well in Europe – except this year. The same players play well at club level and less well at international level.

Perhaps they are tired of being winners?
When you have a taste for winning, you never lose it. But the Italian League is a killer, I have to say – it really takes it out of you. They seem to finish the season utterly exhausted, but I manage to avoid that – I have a different mindset to them.

Do you feel there is a team who are almost pre-destined to win Euro 2000?
Holland – they're at home, it'll be their big occasion.

The men who matter

Josep Guardiola

Jeff King looks at the career of one of Spain's true greats

Fact file

Country Spain
Club Barcelona
Born January 18, 1971, Santpedor, Barcelona
International debut October 1992, v Northern Ireland
International caps 34 (4 goals)
Honours European Cup 1992; European Super Cup 1992; European Cup-winners Cup 1997; Olympic Gold 1992; Spanish League 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1998, 1999; Spanish Cup 1997

IN THE 18 months since Jose Antonio Camacho replaced Javier Clemente as Spain's national coach, European football's great under-achievers have undergone a huge change. The days when the squad was a private club for Real Madrid and Barcelona stars are gone, along with the chip-on-his-shoulder coach and his bunker mentality. New players – 25 in all – from 15 clubs have made their international debuts under Camacho.

Not all has been changed, though. The current coach insists that Spain's vertebral column of Fernando Hierro, Pep Guardiola and Raul remains sacrosanct. The latter two, in particular, personify the values of Camacho's new Spain: world-class players whose ambition is forged on a sweat-until-you-drop, feet-on-the-ground attitude.

"Spain are nobodies on the international scene," says Guardiola, "and that will only change if we do our talking on the field, not before tournaments begin. That means two things: believing that we can beat the best, but treating even modest opponents with due respect."

Guardiola is a home-grown icon at Barcelona, but it's alongside soul-mate Raul in a Spain shirt that he cuts his finest dash.

He made his full international debut in 1992 shortly after guiding Spain to Olympic Gold – in Barcelona. Although he eventually became a fixture in Javier Clemente's squad and his absence through injury was one of the reasons Spain failed so miserably at France 98, Guardiola's approach to the game sits easier with the Camacho no-fear school.

A 2-0 victory against Italy in March confirmed that Spain will attempt to steamroller opponents at Euro 2000 with attacking football. The starting line-up alone was an eloquent statement of intent: Camacho sent out a midfield of Guardiola, Valeron and Fran, a trio who would struggle to tackle a burglar clad in nappies.

Italian coach Dino Zoff countered with Ambrosini, Di Biaggio and Pessotto, defensive midfielders whose on-field countenance makes the average mugger seem friendly.

"Nobody has the ability to dictate the pace of a game like Pep," says Barça team-mate Ruud Hesp. "He sees things way before the rest of us. I'd have him in my team even if he was on one leg. He's the world's best player in his position."

Rivaldo is another member of the Guardiola fan club, saying: "He frightens the opposition because he's capable of that killer pass at any moment. His other great virtue is that he rarely takes more than one or two touches; that makes him difficult to mark, so he can keep the game flowing."

Earlier this season Guardiola found himself out of favour at Barça for the first time since his 1990 League debut. Coach Louis Van Gaal was widely criticised for leaving his peerless midfielder on the bench, but Guardiola accepted the decision with good grace and was rewarded with a timely confidence boost from Camacho. "Pep is one of my untouchables," he said, "and barring injury he will be Spain's midfield general at the [European] Championship."

"I'll never forget Camacho's support when I was out of the Barça team," says Guardiola. "His confidence in me means he has a real convert to the cause."

After Barcelona's 3-0 defeat at Real Madrid in February, Van Gaal decided it was time to hand the reins back to his ace; it is no coincidence that his return coincided with nine consecutive victories. At 29, Guardiola now has his eyes on European glory with Spain.

Untouchable...Pep Guardiola is an automatic choice for Jose Antonio Camacho

News

Gavin Hamilton rounds up the latest stories from the Euro 2000 finalists

Staying on...Robert Waseige

BELGIUM

Contract for Waseige

ROBERT WASEIGE has been rewarded for overseeing an upturn in the fortunes of the Belgian national team with a new contract.

Waseige, whose current deal runs until the end of Euro 2000, will stay as head coach until the 2002 World Cup finals in Japan/South Korea.

The national side threw away a two-goal lead against fellow finals co-hosts Holland in their recent 2-2 friendly draw in Brussels, but the camp was lifted by the overall display. Goalkeeper Filip De Wilde said: "I think our first-half performance was the best from the national team for years."

After the match, Waseige looked ahead to the finals. "Our group's difficult but I think we can get to the quarter-finals," he said.

CZECH REPUBLIC

NATIONAL coach Jozef Chovanec was full of praise for the performance of captain Jiri Nemec in the 3-1 win over Australia in Teplice.

Nemec played in a defensive midfield role in place of Radek Bejbl and Chovanec said: "He played the part after a long absence and I was 100 per cent satisfied with his performance."

Jaromin Blazek, who has displaced Tomas Postulka as number one goalkeeper at Sparta Prague, made his international debut in the game.

The youthful Karel Rosicky also did well for 75 minutes in midfield and looks to have secured a place in the squad.

DENMARK

MIDFIELDER Allan Nielsen hopes a loan transfer to Wolves in the English First Division has saved his place in Denmark's Euro 2000 squad. The move from Spurs, where he was wasting away in the reserves, was agreed on English transfer deadline day.

National coach Bo Johansson had warned all his players that only those involved in regular first-team soccer would be considered, and he left Nielsen out of the squad for the 2-1 defeat in Portugal, where the team's goal was scored by the prolific Jon Dahl Tomasson.

Herfolge's player-boss John Jensen has been touted for a shock recall for the tournament, and he refuses to rule it out. But a return is unlikely for the former Arsenal midfielder, especially with Nielsen now back in the frame.

Claus Jensen of Bolton and Martin Laursen of Verona both made brief debuts as substitutes against Portugal, and are likely to have further chances to impress before the final squad is chosen.

Striker Miklos Molnar has also emerged as a strong contender for a place after starting well with new club Kansas City Wizards in the MLS.

The Portugal game revealed Johansson's basic thinking for Euro 2000. Peter Schmeichel is goalkeeper behind a steady back four of Thomas Helveg, Jes Hogh, Rene Henriksen and Jan Heintze. On the wings were Martin Jorgensen and Jesper Gronkjaer. Up front he paired Tomasson and Ebbe Sand. Central midfield remains the problem. Against the Portuguese Johansson used Stig Tofting and veteran Brian Steen Nielsen, but that area of the team is wide open to a player who impresses in the next two months.

ENGLAND

MANCHESTER UNITED striker Andy Cole has hit out at Kevin Keegan's decision to guarantee captain Alan Shearer a place in England's starting line-up at Euro 2000.

"I've got no doubts I could work with anyone, but I don't think it should be a case of who will work with Shearer," Cole said. "There are too many good centre-forwards in England to say you can only work with one person."

Keegan has hinted that the door is still open for a number of former England players who were long thought to be out of the picture. "I've watched Nicky Barmby twice while Darren Anderton is back in the Spurs side, and I shall be watching more of the fringe players going into the tournament," he said.

"Barmby is starting to play the sort of football that is getting him near to being back in the England side and you couldn't say that a year ago.

"I don't close the door on anybody. It may have looked closed on Steve McManaman, but two good performances against Manchester United [in the Champions League] will have everybody talking. I haven't actually seen him play live yet for Real Madrid. So far he's only been a bit player."

Keegan confirmed that both David Batty and Graeme Le Saux will miss the finals through injury, but said that Robbie Fowler still had time to play himself into contention after his return from injury.

"Robbie is desperately keen to be involved and I wouldn't write him off at all for the summer. He has a real chance of being available."

FRANCE

THE country's 2-0 win away to Scotland prompted an upbeat assessment of prospects for this summer's finals from national coach Roger Lemerre. "The team has rediscovered its will," he said. "And they have a very strong balance.

"Wednesday's match [against Scotland] made me think of a novel. The first pages are always difficult, but then once you've got into the story, you don't want to put it down."

Lemerre also singled out midfielder Johan Micoud and forward Thierry Henry for special praise.

"Thierry Henry is having an exemplary season at Arsenal. He's an exceptional goalscorer. He didn't tire and he contributed a great deal to our game.

"If we add more rigour to our game, we can make it. This team has the strength to win Euro 2000."

GERMANY

BAYER LEVERKUSEN'S strong showing in the Bundesliga this season led national coach Erich Ribbeck to include six of their players in his squad for the Croatia friendly, which ended 1-1. This meant recalls for Paulo Rink and Stefan Beinlich, who both went on as late substitutes.

Ribbeck then intimated that he has all but decided on the 22 players who will make Germany's Euro 2000 squad.

Ribbeck says he will take 16 of the 17-man squad who were selected for the Croatia game. To

them, he will add Jens Jeremies, despite the Bayern Munich midfielder's recent critical comments *(see page 68)*, Marco Bode, Markus Babbel, Sebastian Deisler and a third goalkeeper, Hans-Jorg Butt.

Ribbeck will also include one further striker – Michael Preetz of Hertha Berlin or one of the Bayern pair Carsten Jancker and Alexander Zickler.

One player who will probably not be making the trip to Holland and Belgium is Thomas Hassler. The veteran midfielder, who has had a great season for 1860 Munich, announced his retirement from international football after Ribbeck could not guarantee him a place and instead asked him to be available on standby.

HOLLAND

TWO goals from Patrick Kluivert rescued a draw for the Dutch in their friendly against Belgium and it is likely that national coach Frank Rijkaard will think again about using a three-man defence.

Midfielder Edgar Davids said: "The experiment didn't quite work out as planned, but these sort of matches are there to try things out. With Euro 2000 we'll have to be able to play in a number of ways."

ITALY

TEAM boss Dino Zoff came under pressure from within his own squad to end experimentation after his side lost 2-0 to Spain in Barcelona.

"Now is the moment to decide who is in the squad," said defender Fabio Cannavaro, "and above all we have to settle on the tactical model because all these changes don't help us."

Zoff, who made seven second-half substitutions during the game, defended his actions, saying: "I wanted to look at the men I had with me. There is still time to do the work we need to undertake and I am not worried."

He later said: "Our objective is to reach the semi-finals. If we don't overestimate ourselves but also don't underestimate ourselves then we can reach that target."

Lazio striker Simone Inzaghi *(profile, page 63)* was the notable addition to the squad to face Spain. Milan midfielder Demetrio Albertini returned after being dropped for February's match against Sweden.

NORWAY

THE national team drew 2-2 against Switzerland in their final away friendly before Euro 2000, and could well have lost had it not been for some fine goalkeeping from man-of-the-match Thomas Myhre.

After the Belgium game at the end of April, coach Nils Johan Semb has two more matches, at home to Slovakia and Italy, to find the necessary players for his Euro squad. In particular, the games will give Semb and his team the chance to work on attacking options.

The coach has criticised striker John Carew's £7.5 million move to Valencia. "Carew is too young to understand that he is headed for trouble," Semb said. "It will be an extremely tough transfer for him.

"There's no question that he's incredibly talented. But I have serious doubts that he will be able to cope with the immense pressure in the Spanish Primera Liga.

"The best thing for him would have been to stay at home for a further three years. Then we would have been certain that his progress was in good hands. It's often a lot tougher out in the big football world. And if he fails, he will feel very alone."

In contention...Italy's Simone Inzaghi

PORTUGAL

GOALKEEPER Vitor Baia faces a race against time to be fit for the summer's finals. He recently underwent surgery on an injured knee in Belgium and is making no promises about a return to action.

National coach Humberto Coelho put out an attacking formation against Denmark in Lisbon and was rewarded with a 2-1 win. However, an early goal by the visitors led him to express caution about Portugal's defence.

"That's the open football we like but it has to be solid football too," he said after the match. "What we want is to tighten up our game."

ROMANIA

NATIONAL coach Emerich Jenei came under fire following the recent 2-0 friendly defeat by Greece in Athens, with one Romanian newspaper even calling for the return of former coach Victor Piturca.

But Jenei shrugged off the poor result, saying: "We had problems with our attack, and if we improve it, we will soon be in a position to play to our real potential. It was a good test."

Romania were without sweeper Gica Popescu

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and striker Adrian Ilie, through injury, while Greece gave a first start to Under-21 international Lambros Choutos, who scored his side's second goal.

SLOVENIA

THE national team continued their preparations for Euro 2000 with a comfortable 4-0 win over Oman in Muscat. Zlatko Zahovic was among the scorers, taking his tally to 21 goals in 44 internationals.

However, the midfielder still has major problems with his Greek club, Olympiakos. He was banned for two months and fined £40,000 after swearing at then coach Alberto Bigon following his substitution in an important League match.

Uncapped midfielder Rajko Tavcar, who plays for struggling German Second Division side Fortuna Koln, was the only new face in the Slovenian squad to face France on April 26.

SPAIN

THE national team's 2-0 victory over Italy gave a major boost to the camp. "We're definitely on the right road now," said Barcelona midfielder Pep Guardiola. "You can see we're now ready to join the likes of Italy in the elite of European football."

Team coach Jose Antonio Camacho said: "When I see my team play like that, all I can do is enjoy myself."

Camacho also said that it was "very doubtful" that Chelsea defender Albert Ferrer would make the final 22-man squad, with Juan Velasco and Michel Salgado ahead of him in the pecking order.

SWEDEN

THE Swedes have been hit by a double injury blow. Midfielder Stefan Schwarz, the current Footballer of the Year, will miss the Euro finals after tearing an Achilles tendon in the 1-1 draw with Austria at the end of March.

Meanwhile, forward Henrik Larsson has ruled himself out of contention despite hopes that he was making a remarkably rapid recovery from the horrific leg break sustained while playing for Celtic earlier this season.

However, any hopes that the injuries to Schwarz and Larsson would persuade Par Zetterberg to end his self-imposed international exile have been dashed.

The Anderlecht midfielder shrugged off a poll in a local newspaper in which 80 per cent of Swedes questioned said they thought he should replace Schwarz in the midfield anchor role.

"The Swedes are not the ones to decide the matter," Zetterberg said. "I will do so myself, and I won't return as long as Soderberg is the national coach."

Not ready...Larsson will miss the finals

YUGOSLAVIA

NATIONAL coach Vujadin Boskov has continued to express optimism about his side's prospects this summer despite the crowd jeering them off the field after their 1-0 win against China in Belgrade.

"This is only the beginning," he said, "we have a lot of friendlies to play and enough time to carve out a championship-winning side. I am happy with the effort my boys put in."

Predrag Mijatovic scored the only goal, in the eighth minute.

Before the game, Boskov announced that first-choice right-back Zoran Mirkovic would not be included in his squad for the finals. Mirkovic received a three-match ban after being sent off in the final qualifier, against Croatia, and would not be eligible to play in any of the group games in the Low Countries.

Turkey have cancelled a friendly, scheduled for April 26 in Izmir, because of Galatasaray's fixture congestion caused by their matches against Leeds in the UEFA Cup semi-final.

That has left national coach Vujadin Boskov without a single, serious test before Euro 2000. Instead of the Turkey game, the Yugoslavs decided to organise a match between the national side and a team selected by journalists.

WARM-UP SCHEDULE

BELGIUM
DENMARK (June 3, Copenhagen)

CZECH REPUBLIC
GERMANY (June 3, Nurnberg)

DENMARK
BELGIUM (June 3, Copenhagen)

ENGLAND
BRAZIL (May 27, Wembley);
UKRAINE (May 31, Wembley);
MALTA (June 3, Valletta)

FRANCE
CROATIA (May 28, Zagreb);
JAPAN (June 4, Casablanca);
KING HASSAN II TNMT FINAL OR 3RD PLACE MATCH (June 6, Casablanca)

GERMANY
REAL MALLORCA (May 30, Palma);
CZECH REPUBLIC (June 3, Nurnberg);
LIECHTENSTEIN (June 7, Freiburg)

HOLLAND
ROMANIA (May 27, Amsterdam);
POLAND (June 4, Amsterdam)

ITALY
NORWAY (June 3, Oslo)

NORWAY
SLOVAKIA (May 27, Oslo);
ITALY (June 3, Oslo)

ROMANIA
HOLLAND (May 27, Amsterdam);
GREECE (June 3, Bucharest)

SLOVENIA
LUXEMBOURG (June 3, Luxembourg)

SPAIN
SWEDEN (June 3, Gothenburg);
LUXEMBOURG (June 7, Luxembourg)

SWEDEN
SPAIN (June 3, Gothenburg)

YUGOSLAVIA
CHINA (May 25, Beijing);
SOUTH KOREA (May 28, Seoul);
SOUTH KOREA (May 30, Seoul);
HONG KONG LEAGUE XI (June 3, Hong Kong)

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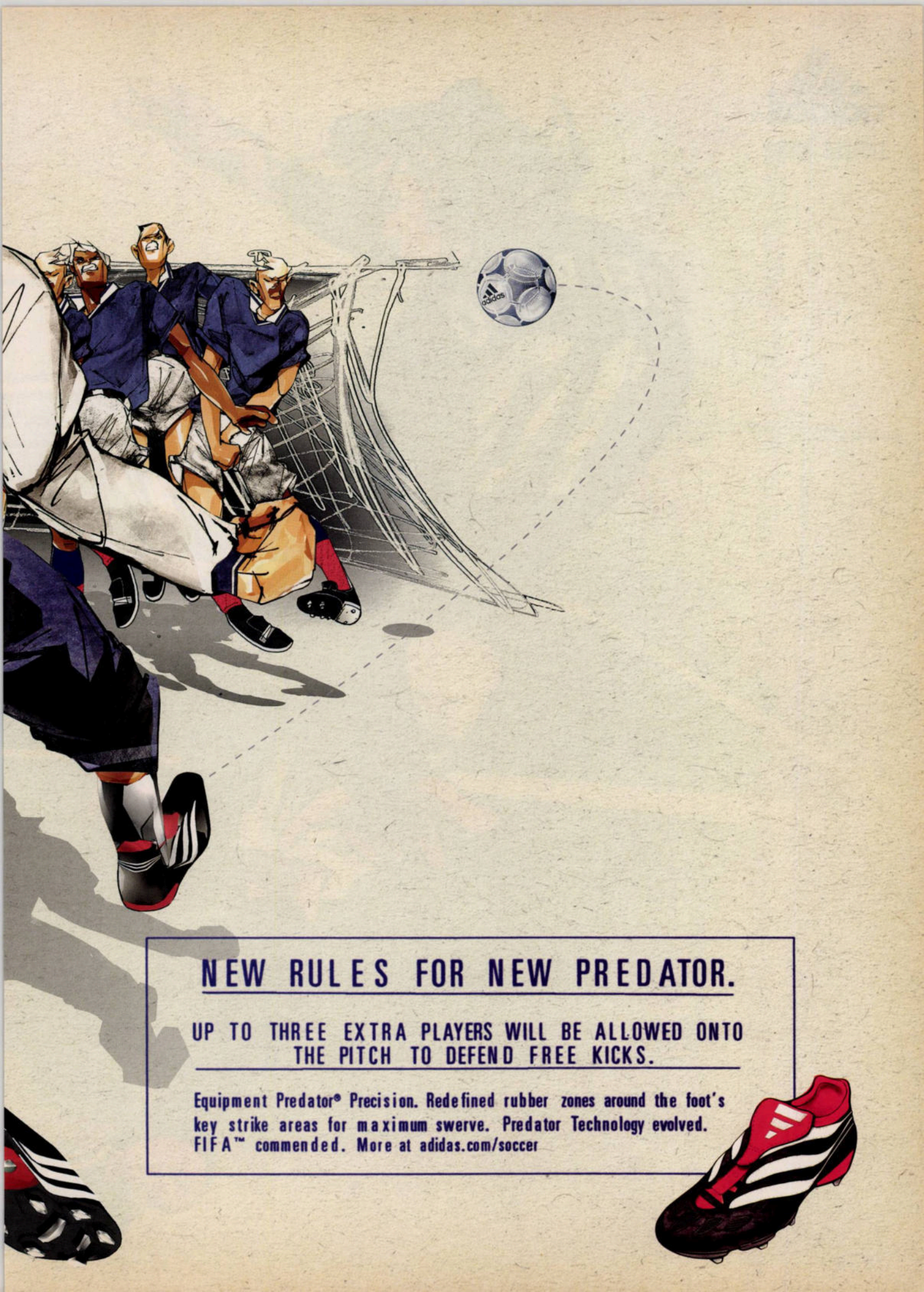
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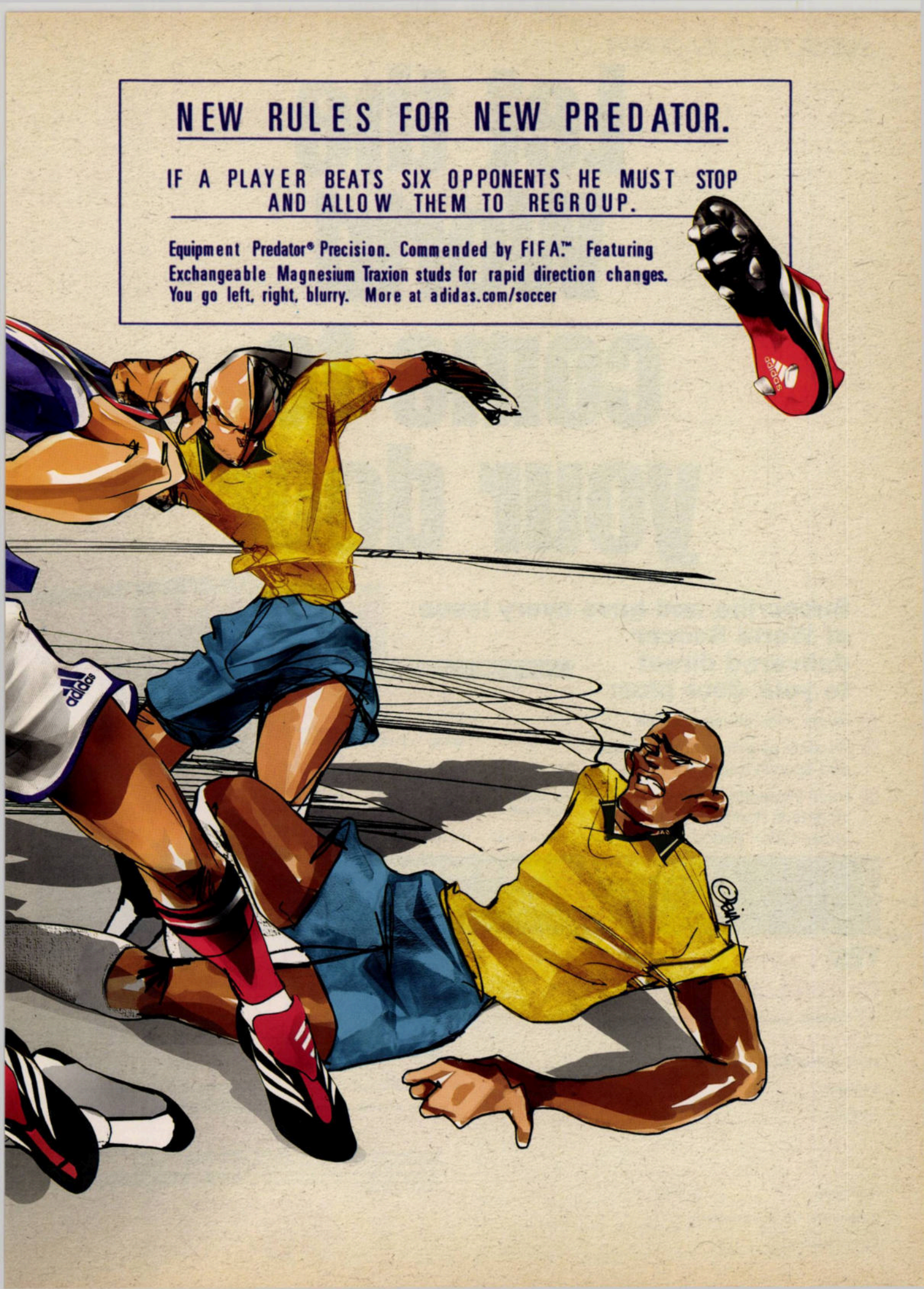

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WORLD SOCCER

JUNE 2000

THE NO.1 INTERNATIONAL FOOTBALL MAGAZINE

WORLD SERVICE

YOUR COMPLETE GUIDE TO THE MONTH'S STATS & FACTS

INTERNATIONALS

Saturday, March 25

Mar 25 - Kuala Lumpur - Asian Cup qual
Malaysia 3 (Mohamed Noor 34, Rusdi Supaman 82, 86)
Taiwan 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 21,000. **Ref:** Hwa (SKo)
Malaysia: Mohamed Sany Fahmy - Abdul Ghani Malik, Syamsul Amri Abu Bakar, Rajinikandh, Bakhtiar Othman, Ahmad Shahrul Azahar (Rosdi Talib 89), Anuar Jusoh, Mohamed Noor Derus (Idris Karim 79), Mohamed Nizaruddin Yusof (Rusdi Supaman 60), Zami Mohamed Noor, Hairul Nizam Hanif.
Taiwan: Cheng Hsing-yang - Yung Jen-cheng, Hui Kai-tsai, Kuo Chen-chang, Yao Ming-chang (Kuei Jen Chen 46), Chun I-wu, Sheau Bao-sheu, Che Ming-huang, Jui Chen-hsu (Jeng I-chen 75), Te Ming-hsu, Ching Wen-wu.

Mar 25 - Kuala Lumpur - Asian Cup qual
Thailand 0
North Korea 0
Att: 15,150. **Ref:** Chan (HK)
Thailand: Wirat Wangchan - Kowit Foythong, Phathanapong Sripramote (Panupong Chimpook 82), Choketawee Promrut, Anuruck Srikert, Chukiat Nossalung, Jatupong Thongsukh, Nirut Surasiang, Dusit Chalermsan, Saksan Pituratana (Pipat Thonkanya 68), Tanachai Boriban (Thawatchai Damrong-Ongtrakul 73).
North Korea: Han Song-ho - Chon Kon, Kim Ho-gun, Ri Man-chol (Kun Uk 76), So Min-chol, Ri Kyong-min, Jon Yong-chol, Ri Hyok-chol (Ryang Kyu-sa 77), Ko Jong-nam, Ju Song-il, Ri Thae-ung.

Mar 25 - Lusaka - Cosafa Castle Cup
Zambia 3 (Sinyangwe 7, Milanzi 32, Nsofwa 89)
Botswana 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 10,000. **Ref:** Chilenda (Mwi)
Zambia: Mbulo - Chilembi, Musabula, Mwewa, Sinyangwe, Tana, Mwape (Kumwenda 89), Mumamba, Kampamba, Tembo (Nsofwa 64), Milanzi (Chiwaya 85).
Botswana: Tshelametse - Mosimanegape, Rasefako, Gabonamong, Marman, Duiker, Paul, Ranku (Mokgweetsi 55), Ditaola, Sunday (Maimela 56), Selolwane (Disang 73).

Monday, March 27

Mar 27 - Kuala Lumpur - Asian Cup qual
Malaysia 1 (Mohamed Nizaruddin Yusof 56)
North Korea 1 (Ko Jong-nam 6)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 18,000. **Ref:** Naotsugu (Jap)

Mar 27 - Kuala Lumpur - Asian Cup qual
Thailand 2 (Saksan Pituratana 74, Cheng Yung-jen og 81)
Taiwan 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 4,000. **Ref:** Andres (Phi)
Thailand: Wirat Wangchan - Kowit Foythong (Tanachai Boriban 88), Choketawee Promrut, Anuruck Srikert, Chukiat Nossalung, Jatupong Thongsukh (Saksan Pituratana 55), Thawatchai Damrong-Ongtrakul, Nirut Surasiang, Dusit Chalermsan, Pipat Thonkanya (Khwanchai Phuangprakob 73), Panupong Chimpook.
Taiwan: Cheng Hsing-yang - Cheng Yung-jen, Hui Kai-tsai, Yao Ming-chang (Chen Jeng-I 63), Lin Kuei-pin, Chun I-wu, Sheau Bao-sheu, Che Ming-huang, Jui Chen-hsu, Te Ming-hsu, Ching Wen-wu.

Tuesday, March 28

Mar 28 - Bogota - WC qual
Colombia 0
Brazil 0
Att: 45,000. **Ref:** Mendez (Uru)
Colombia: O Cordoba - Martinez, I Cordoba, Bermudez, Yepes, Viveros, Rincon, Dinas, Oviedo (Moreno 75), Angel, Ricard (Maturana 59).
Brazil: Dida - Evanilson, Antonio Carlos, Aldair, Roberto Carlos, Emerson, Vampeta, Ze Roberto, Alex (Ricardinho 46), Elber (Ronaldo Assis 68), Jardel (Edilson 46).

Mar 28 - San Salvador - friendly
El Salvador 3 (Diaz Arce 10, Gonzalez 34, Martinez 57)
Haiti 1 (Pierre 41)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 4,000

Mar 28 - Valletta - friendly
Malta 0
Northern Ireland 3 (M Hughes pen 14, Quinn 16, Healy 41)
HT: 0-3. **Att:** 1,000
Malta: Barry - Said, Debono, Buttigieg (Turner 46), Vella (Azzopardi 69), Ciantar (Ifeanyi 46), Carabott, Agius (Mifsud 46), Chetcuti, Busuttil (Veselji 63), Nwoko (Mallia 75).
Northern Ireland: Carroll (Taylor 86) - Griffin, Williams, Murdock (Sonner 46), Nolan, Gillespie (Johnson 63), Lomas, Lennon, M Hughes (Horlock 77), Healy, Quinn (Coote 70).

Mar 28 - Belgrade - friendly
Yugoslavia 1 (Mijatovic 8)
China 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 12,000. **Ref:** Puhl (Hun)
Yugoslavia: Kralj (Cicovic 46) - N Sakic (Komljenovic 46), M Djukic, Mihajlovic, Djorovic (Krstajic 46), J Stankovic (Drulovic 46), Jokanovic (P Djordjevic 46), Grozdic, Jugovic (Mirkovic 55), Mijatovic (D Kovacevic 46), Milosevic.
China: Jian Jin (Ou Chu Liang 78) - Shen So, Li Wei Feng, Li Ming I (Wu Chen Yin), Li Ming II (Yao Xia 60), Li Tie (Qu Shen Quin 54), Qi Mong, Shen Si, Ma Nin Xu, Su Mao Zhen (Hu Yun Feng 78), Fan Zhi Yi.

Wednesday, March 29

Mar 29 - Buenos Aires - WC qual
Argentina 4 (Batistuta 10, Veron 34, pen 71, Claudio Lopez 88)
Chile 1 (Tello 29)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 50,000. **Ref:** Moreno (Ecu)
Argentina: Bonano - Ayala, Pochettino, Samuel, J Zanetti, Simeone, Veron, Kily Gonzalez, Claudio Lopez (Gustavo Lopez 89), Batistuta (Crespo 89), Ortega (Sensini 82).
Chile: M Ramirez - Maldonado, Reyes, Margas, P Contreras, Ormazabal (Aros 80), Acuna, Tello, Pizarro (Sierra 71), Zamorano, Salas.

Mar 29 - Graz - friendly
Austria 1 (Flogel 17)
Sweden 1 (J Pettersson 86)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 9,120. **Ref:** Hamer (Lux)
Austria: Wohlfahrt - Hatz, Neukirchner (Dospel 65), Winklhofer, Stranzl, Schopp, Prilasnig, Flogel, Vastic (Mayrleb 46), Herzog (Kirchler 56), Weissenberger (Amerhauser 80).
Sweden: Asper - R Nilsson, P Andersson (Andreas Andersson 46), Mellberg, Kamark, Schwarz (D Andersson 46), Svensson, Mjallby, Anders Andersson, Arvidsson (M Jonsson 59), J Pettersson.

Mar 29 - Brussels - friendly
Belgium 2 (Verheyen 13, E Mpenza 25)
Holland 2 (Kluivert 32, 81)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 50,000. **Ref:** Braschi (Ita)
Belgium: De Wilde - Leonard, Staelens, Deflandre, Crasson, Wilmots (Goossens 82), Goor, Vanderhaeghe, Verheyen (M Mpenza 85), Strupar (De Bilde 64), E Mpenza.
Holland: Westerveld - Stam, F De Boer, Cocu (Van Bronckhorst 46), Bogarde (Konterman 57), Seedorf, Davids (Numan 77), Bosvelt, Kluivert, Makaay (Talan 75), Overmars.

Mar 29 - Zenica - friendly
Bosnia 1 (Konjic 88)
Macedonia 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 20,000. **Ref:** Supraha (Cro)
Bosnia: Guso - Sabic (Ihtijarevic 55), Kapetanovic, Konjic, Varesanovic, Hibic, Bolic (Huljev 90), Salihamidzic (Klaic 46), Kodro (Akrapovic 46), Barbarez, Topic (Duro 75).
Macedonia: Filevski (Nikolov 46) - Stavrevski, Stojanovski (Lazarevski 70), Sedloski, Babunski, Serafimovski, Karanfilovski (Georgioski 55), Micevski, (Gerasimovski 65), Hristov, Ciric, Saqiri.

Mar 29 - Sofia - friendly
Bulgaria 4 (Todorov 23, Donkov 42, I Petkov 62, S Petrov 80)
Belarus 1 (Skripchenko 57)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 2,000. **Ref:** Kacenga (Slk)
Bulgaria: Zdravkov - Markov, I Petkov, Topuzakov, S Petrov, Borimirov, Milen Petkov (Stoilov 60), Donkov (Ivanov 46), Balakov (Alexandrov 81), Iliev (Peev 46), Todorov (M Petrov 77).
Belarus: Shantalosov - Yaskovich, Shtanjuk, Luhvich (Shuneiko 77), Gerashtenko (Skripchenko 46), Gurenko, Baranov (Lavrik 63), Tarlovskii (Ostrovskii 46), Bialkevich, Hatskevich (Rinadyuk 70), Stripeikis.

Mar 29 - Zagreb - friendly
Croatia 1 (N Kovac 70)
Germany 1 (Rehmer 12)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 5,000. **Ref:** Michel (Slk)
Croatia: Pletikosa - Zivkovic (Saric 63), Jarni, R Kovac, Stimac, Simic (Tomas 46), Asanovic, Stanic (Rapajic 84), Suker, N Kovac, Boksic.
Germany: Kahn - Rehmer (Ramelow 46), Ziege (Beinlich 88), Linke, Nowotny, Ballack, Wosz, Hamann, Bierhoff, Matthaus, Kirsten (Rink 84).

Mar 29 - Teplice - friendly
Czech Republic 3 (Fukal 9, Koller 52, Ulich 66)
Australia 1 (Foster 89)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 9,800. **Ref:** Hrinak (Slk)
Czech Rep: Blazek - Gabriel (Vlcek 38), Rada, Fukal, Nedved, Cizek (Ulich 59), Nemec, Poborsky (Bejbl 73), Rosicky (Wagner 76), Koller, Verbir (Lokvenc 59).
Australia: Kalac - Murphy, Muscat (Casserly 71), Popovic, Van Bierk (Johnson 46), Corica (Foster 57), Okon, Skoko, Lazaridis, Agostino (Zane 71), Viduka.

Mar 29 - Quito - WC qual
Ecuador 2 (Delgado 17, Aguinaga 50)
Venezuela 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 50,000. **Ref:** Gamboa (Chl)
Ecuador: Cevallos - De la Cruz, Jacome, Montano, Cagua (Ayovi 49), Blandon, Tenorio (Chala 73), Aguinaga, Obregon, Graziani (Porozo 38), Delgado.
Sent off: Montano 25min.
Venezuela: Dudamel - Alvarez, Villafraz (Mea Vitali 62), Becerra, Rey, Urdaneta, Rojas (Arango 55), Bidoglio, Jose Vera, Casseres, Garcia (Ochoa 59).

Mar 29 - Athens - friendly
Greece 2 (Amanatidis 59, Choutos 88)
Romania 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 4,590. **Ref:** Sars (Fra)
Greece: Nikopolidis - Mavrogenidis (Basinas 65), Georgatos (Venetidis 78), Dabizas, Ouzounidis, Poursanidis, Giorgiadis, Amanatidis (Goumas 73), Kyparissis (Choutos 60), Tsartas (Zikos 86), Niniadis (Konstantinidis 46).
Romania: Stelea (Lobont 82) - Petrescu (Petre 75), Ciobotariu, Filipescu, Haldan, Nastase, Mutu (Rosu 65), Munteanu (Mihalcea 65), Moldovan (Ganea 56), Hagi, Contra.

Mar 29 - Debrecen - friendly
Hungary 0
Poland 0
Att: 8,000. **Ref:** Arsic (Yug)
Hungary: Kiraly - Cs Feher, V Sebok, Hrutka, Matyus - Eros, Halmai, Lendvai (O Vincze 90), Ilies, Tokoli (T Sandor 46), Lisztes (K Kenesei 79).
Poland: Dudek - Klos, Bak (Zielinski 62), Waldoch - Michal Zewlakow, Karwan, Zdebel (Rzasa 60), Swierczewski (Iwan 46), Kryznowek (Kaluzny 77), Reiss (Bizacki 60), Gilewicz.

Mar 29 - Ashkelon - friendly
Israel 1 (Berkovic 82)
Georgia 1 (Kinkladze 27)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 8,500. **Ref:** Tokat (Tur)
Israel: R Cohen (Kornfein 46) - Harazi (Halfon 85), Talker, Shelach, Benado, Keissy, Tal, Revivo, Badir, Berkovic, Udi (Sivilia 24).
Georgia: Grishikashvili (Gvarmadze 46) - Silagadze, Demetradze (Sichinava 46), Kizanishvili, Kobiashvili, Kaladze, Nemsadze, Ketsbaia, Dzamarauli (Kenteshashvili 73), Kinkladze, A Arveladze (Aleksidze 81).

Mar 29 - Asian Cup qual
Malaysia 3
Thailand 2

Mar 29 - Kuala Lumpur - Asian Cup qual
North Korea 2 (Ryang Kyu-sa 12, 21)
Taiwan 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 4,000. **Ref:** Andres (Phi)
North Korea: Han Song-ho - Kim Ho-gun (Rim Kun-uk 59), Ri Man-chol (Ri Tae-song 79), So Min-chol, Jon Yong-chol, Kim Chang-son, Ri Hyok-chol (Ri Kum-chol 68), Ko Jong-nam, Kim Chang-myong, Ryang Kyu-sa, Ri Thae-ung.
Taiwan: Cheng Hsing-yang - Cheng Yung-jen, Hui Kai-tsai, Kuo Chen-chang, Yao Ming-chang (Kun Shan-chen 65), Lin Kuei-pin, Chun I-we, Che Ming-huang, Jui Chen-hsu (Chun Nan-chen 78), Te Ming-hsu, Wang Chien-hsiang.

Mar 29 - Lima - WC qual
Peru 2 (Solano pen 54, Palacios 56)
Paraguay 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 46,000. **Ref:** Elizondo (Arg)
Peru: O Ibanez - Jorge Soto, Pajuelo, Rebosio, Olivares (Huamin 71), Del Solar, Jayo, Palacios, Solano, Zuniga (Holsen 54), Pizarro (Ciurlizza 80).
Paraguay: Chilavert - Arce, Ayala, Gamarra, Caniza, Acuna, Paredes (Gavilan 74), Enciso (G Gonzalez 65), Campos, Cardozo (Struway 65), Santa Cruz.

Mar 29 - Leiria - friendly
Portugal 2 (Rui Costa pen 41, Figo 50)
Denmark 1 (Tomasson 3)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 9,000. **Ref:** McDermott (RI)
Portugal: Espinha - Abel Xavier, Fernando Couto, Beto, Dimas, Vidigal, Rui Costa (Costinha 75), Sergio Conceicao (Rui Jorge 89), Figo (Joao Pinto 63), Sa Pinto (Pauleta 46), Nuno Gomes (Dani 46).
Denmark: Schmeichel - Heintze (Schjonberg 46), Hogh, Henriksen, Helveg, Gronkjaer (Goldbaek 46), Steen Nielsen (M Laursen 85), Tofting (Colding 60), M Jorgensen (C Jensen 68), Tomasson (Molnar 46), Sand.

Mar 29 - Glasgow - friendly
Scotland 0
France 2 (Wiltord 54, Henry 88)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 48,157. **Ref:** Pedersen (Nor)
Scotland: Sullivan - Ritchie (Pressley 46), Dailly, Hendry, Telfer (A Johnston 78), B Ferguson, Hutchison, Cameron (McCann 46), Davidson, Gallacher (Burchill 79), Dodds.
France: Rame - Thuram, Desailly, Blanc, Lizarazu, Giuly (Wiltord 46), Deschamps (Vieira 60), Petit, Djorkaeff (Micoud 46), Dugarry (Pires 72), Henry.

Mar 29 - Barcelona - friendly
Spain 2 (Alfonso 61, Abelardo 80)
Italy 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 53,600. **Ref:** Colombo (Fra)
Spain: Molina (Canizares 46) - Velasco, Paco, Abelardo, Aranzabal (Juanfran 74), Guardiola (Munitis 78), Etxeberria (Rufete 64), Fran, Valeron (Engonga 82), Raul (Ivan Helguera 78), Urzaiz (Alfonso 46).
Italy: Buffon - Ferrara, Cannavaro, Maldini, Fuser (Zambrotta 46), Di Biagio (Tacchinardi 46), Ambrosini (Gattuso 60), Pessotto (Pancaro 74), Fiore (S Inzaghi 60), F Inzaghi (Delvecchio 46), Del Piero (Totti 46).

Mar 29 - Lugano - friendly
Switzerland 2 (Chapuisat 56, Cantaluppi 74)
Norway 2 (Solbakken 32, Skammelsrud pen 73)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 5,800. **Ref:** Rodomonti (Ita)
Switzerland: Zuberbuhler - Jeanneret, Henchoz, Muller, Mazzarelli, Sesa, Vogel, Sforza (Cantaluppi 46), Buhlmann (Gerber 75), Rey (Yakin 66), Chapuisat.
Norway: Myhre - Trond Andersen, Berg, Bragstad (Hoftun 46), Bergdolmo, Solskjaer, Solbakken, Skammelsrud, Mykland, Iversen (J D Sorensen 86), T A Flo.

Mar 29 - Montevideo - WC qual
Uruguay 1 (Garcia 26)
Bolivia 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 60,000. **Ref:** Pereira (Arg)
Uruguay: Carini - Mendez, Lopez, Montero, D Rodriguez, Garcia, Cedres (Olivera 57), Coelho, O'Neill, Recoba (Poyet 89), Alonso (Zalayeta 76).
Bolivia: Fernandez - Rivera, O Sanchez, Pena, Sandy (Rimba 75), Ivan Castillo, Justiniano, Cristaldo, Gutierrez (Suarez 60), E Sanchez, Moreno (Botero 71).

Mar 29 - Cardiff - friendly
Wales 1 (Giggs 60)
Finland 2 (Litmanen 21, Blake og 42)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 66,500. **Ref:** Ross (NI)
Wales: Crossley - Barnard (G Roberts 66), Page, Coleman, Melville, Savage (A Johnson 79), Pembridge (I Roberts 86), Giggs, Speed, Robinson, Blake (Saunders 79).
Finland: Enckelman (T Moilanen 46) - Reini, Hyypia, Saastamoinen, Tihinen, Kolkka, Nurmela, Riihilahti, Valakari (J Wiss 64), Forssell (Paatelainen 46), Litmanen (M Lehkosuo 69).

Saturday, April 1

Apr 1 - Port-au-Prince - WC qual
Haiti 9 (Pierre 2, Menelas 3, Michel 3, Edouard)
Bahamas 0
Att: 12,000

Sunday, April 2

Apr 2 - Damascus - Asian Cup qual
Bahrain 4
Maldives 1

Apr 2 - Havana - WC qual
Cuba 1 (Hernandez 19)
Surinam 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 8,000

Apr 2 - Guatemala City - WC qual
Guatemala 0
El Salvador 1 (Diaz Arce 52)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 29,000

Apr 2 - Doha - Asian Cup qual
Palestine 2 (Al-Manasseri 1, Al-Jaiech 62)
Pakistan 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 10,000

Apr 2 - Panama City - WC qual
Panama 1 (Julio Dely Valdes 69)
Honduras 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 40,000

Apr 2 - Doha - Asian Cup qual
Qatar 3 (Nadmi 36, Mustafa 39, Al-Enazi 73)
Kazakhstan 1 (Avedyev 82)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 10,000

Apr 2 - Damascus - Asian Cup qual
Syria 0
Iran 1

Apr 2 - Port of Spain - WC qual
Trinidad & Tobago 3 (Dwarika pen 68, pen 90, Eve 79)
Dominican Republic 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 25,000

Apr 2 - Lusaka - friendly
Zambia 1 (Nsofwa 46)
Kenya 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 8,000

Tuesday, April 4

Apr 4 - Aleppo - Asian Cup qual
Bahrain 1
Iran 0

Apr 4 - Doha - Asian Cup qual
Jordan 5 (Busama 6, 22, Abdullah 35, Al-Khateeb 37, 47)
Palestine 1 (Fahad 49)
HT: 4-0. **Att:** 11,000

Apr 4 - Doha - Asian Cup qual
Qatar 5 (Nadmi pen 25, pen 85, Al-Kuwari 51, 73, Hassan 68)
Pakistan 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 11,000

Apr 4 - Aleppo - Asian Cup qual
Syria 6
Maldives 0

Wednesday, April 5

Apr 5 - Seoul - Asian Cup qual
Myanmar 2
Mongolia 0

Apr 5 - Seoul - Asian Cup qual
South Korea 9 (Sim Jae-won 32, Kim Eun-jung 47, Lee Chun-soo 50, 51, Seol Ki-hyeon 58, Kim Eun-jung 74, An Hyo-yeon 77, Seol Ki-hyeon 79, Seol Ki-hyeon 84)
Laos 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 22,000

Thursday, April 6

Apr 6 - Doha - Asian Cup qual
Kazakhstan 2 (Khamir 38, Avedev 90)
Palestine 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 4,000

Apr 6 - Bangkok - Asian Cup qual
North Korea 4 (Ri Kyong-min 16, Ryang Kyu-sa 49, Ri Hyok-chol 73, 84)
Malaysia 1 (Ooi Hoe Guan 26)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 20,000

Apr 6 - Doha - Asian Cup qual
Pakistan 0
Jordan 5 (A Yusuf 6, Abu Raba 11, G Yusuf 13, 34, Al-Khateeb 80)
HT: 0-4. **Att:** 8,000

Apr 6 - Bangkok - Asian Cup qual
Thailand 1 (Dumrong-Ongtrakul 43)
Taiwan 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 20,000

EUROPEAN UNDER-21 CHAMPIONSHIP

Mar 29 (Barcelona, play-off): England 3 (A Campbell 24, Lampard pen 49, Hendrie 64) Yugoslavia 0.

FINALS SCHEDULE

(Slovakia, May 27-June 4)

Group A - Spain (holders), Czech Republic, Croatia, Holland.
Group B - Italy, England, Slovakia, Turkey.

May 27: Spain v Czech Rep (Trencin)
Croatia v Holland (Trnava)
Italy v England (Slovan Bratislava)
Slovakia v Turkey (Inter Bratislava)
May 29: Spain v Croatia (Trnava)
Czech Rep v Holland (Trencin)
Italy v Slovakia (Slovan Bratislava)
England v Turkey (Inter Bratislava)
June 1: Holland v Spain (Trnava)
Czech Rep v Croatia (Trencin)
Turkey v Italy (Slovan Bratislava)
England v Slovakia (Inter Bratislava)
June 3: 5th place play-off - Gp A 3rd v Gp B 3rd (Inter Bratislava)
June 4: 3rd place play-off - Gp A 2nd v Gp B 2nd (Inter Bratislava).
June 4: Final - Gp A 1st v Gp B 1st (Slovan Bratislava).

OTHER MATCHES

Mar 28 (Offenbach): Germany B 4 (Dundee 56, Sebescen 78, Passlack 86, Reichenberger 88) Russia B 4 (Semak 27, Beschastnykh 48, Titov 66, 90).
(Bellinzona): Switzerland U-21 2 (Frei 32, Bieli 49) Norway U-21 1 (Hoseth pen 59).
(Barcelona): Spain U-21 3 (Gerard 18, 74, Farinos 34) Italy U-21 0.
(Kapfenberg): Austria U-21 0 Sweden U-21 1 (Berglund 47).
(Corradino): Malta U-21 1 (M Galea 22) N Ireland U-21 2 (Kirk 6, Harkin 89).
(Kilmarnock): Scotland U-21 0 France U-21 2 (Sorlin 71, Reveillere 90).
(Oliveira do Bairro): Portugal U-21 1 (Paulo Costa 34) Denmark U-21 1 (Karlsen 20).
(Varazdin): Croatia U-21 2 (Sokota 20, Schindzielorz 44) Germany U-21 0.
(Sheffield): Sheffield Utd 0 Latvia 1 (Pahars 79).
Mar 29 (Travnik): Bosnia U-214 (Silic 5, Skoro 34, 54, Zilic 84) Macedonia U-21 1 (Dimitrovski 6).
(Sofia): Bulgaria U-21 4 (Kolev 6, Gargorov 7, Tunchev 56, Berbatov 62) Belarus U-21 1 (Udodau 15).
(Blsany): Czech Republic U-21 2 (Heinz 63, 85) Turkey U-21 2 (Erhan Albaurak 31, 71).
(Tbilisi): Georgia U-21 1 (Tsereteli pen 45) Russia U-21 1 (Bazayev 15).
Mar 30 (Tokyo): Japan U-23 4 (Nakamura 18, Takahara 40, 58, Kojima 63) New Zealand U-23 0.

ESM ELEVEN

EUROPEAN SPORTS MAGAZINES — MARCH 2000

HOW THEY LINE UP

Barthez (2, Monaco); Angloma (3, Valencia), Mihajlovic (5, Lazio), Abelardo (3, Barça), R Carlos (4, Real Madrid); Figo (3, Barça), Keane (5, Man Utd), Emerson (3, Leverkusen), Raul (3, Real Madrid); Shevchenko (3, Milan), S Inzaghi (5, Lazio).

HOW THEY VOTED

A BOLA (PORTUGAL)

Canizares (Valencia); Ferrer (Chelsea), Mihajlovic (Lazio), Djukic (Valencia), R Carlos (Real Madrid); Figo (Barça), Kaladze (Kyiv Dynamo), Rui Costa (Fiorentina), Rivaldo (Barça); Shevchenko (Milan), S Inzaghi (Lazio).

DON BALON (SPAIN)

Kahn (Bayern); Angloma (Valencia), Abelardo (Barça), Mihajlovic (Lazio), R Carlos (Real Madrid); Scholl (Bayern), Keane (Man Utd), Raul (Real Madrid), Rivaldo (Barça); Kluivert (Barça), S Inzaghi (Lazio).

FOOT (BELGIUM)

Barthez (Monaco); Nowotny (Leverkusen), Hyypia (Liverpool), Mihajlovic (Lazio), R Carlos (Real Madrid); Emerson (Leverkusen), Poyet (Chelsea), Keane (Man Utd), Davids (Juve); Shevchenko (Milan), Kluivert (Barça).

FRANCE FOOTBALL

Barthez (Monaco); Velasco (Celta Vigo), Abelardo (Barça), Blanc (Inter), Lizarazu (Bayern); Emerson (Leverkusen), Davids (Juve), Karpin (Celta Vigo), Zidane (Juve); Elber (Bayern), Kewell (Leeds).

GAZZETTA DELLO SPORT (ITA)

Dudek (Feyenoord); Angloma (Valencia), Mihajlovic (Lazio), Abelardo (Barça), Maldini (Milan); Keane (Man Utd), Figo (Barça), Veron (Lazio), Gabri (Barça); S Inzaghi (Lazio), Raul (Real Madrid).

KICKER (GERMANY)

Martyn (Leeds); Angloma (Valencia), Stam (Man Utd), Fukal (Sparta Prague), Ergun (Galatasaray); Parlour (Arsenal), Scholl (Bayern), Emerson (Leverkusen), Figo (Barça); Arif (Galatasaray), Yorke (Man Utd).

VOETBAL INTERNATIONAL (HOLLAND)

Kahn (Bayern); Puyol (Barça), Desailly (Chelsea), F De Boer (Barça), Harte (Leeds); Parlour (Arsenal), Keane (Man Utd), Emre (Galatasaray), Giggs (Man Utd); S Inzaghi (Lazio), Henry (Arsenal).

WORLD SOCCER

Dudek (Feyenoord); Zambrotta (Juve), Hyypia (Liverpool), Mihajlovic (Lazio), R Carlos (Real Madrid); Gabri (Barça), Kewell (Leeds), Keane (Man Utd), Raul (Real Madrid); Shevchenko (Milan), S Inzaghi (Lazio).

EUROPE

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

QUARTER-FINALS – 1ST LEGS

(April 4)

FC Porto 1 (Jardel 46)
Bayern Munich 1 (Paulo Sergio 80)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 30,000. **Ref:** Levnikov (Rus)
Porto: Hilario - Nelson, Esquerdinha, Paulinho Santos, Jorge Costa, Aloisio, Chainho (Domingos 84), Deco, Drulovic, Nuno Capucho (Clayton 73), Jardel.
Bayern: Kahn - Babbel, Jeremies, Lizarazu, Kuffour, Effenberg, Andersson, Salihamidzic (Santa Cruz 79), Paulo Sergio, Elber (Jancker 72), Scholl (Fink 86).

Real Madrid 0
Manchester United 0
Att: 77,000. **Ref:** Veissiere (Fra)
Real Madrid: Casillas - Michel Salgado, Karanka, Ivan Campo, Roberto Carlos, Helguera, Redondo, McManaman, Savio (Balic 75), Raul, Morientes (Ognjenovic 85).
Manchester United: Bosnich - G Neville, Stam, Berg, Irwin (Silvestre 86), Scholes (Butt 80), Keane, Beckham, Giggs, Cole, Yorke (Sheringham 75).

(April 5)

Chelsea 3 (Zola 30, Flo 34, 38)
Barcelona 1 (Figo 64)
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 33,662. **Ref:** Merk (Ger)
Chelsea: De Goey - Petrescu (Di Matteo 72), Babayaro, Thome, Ferrer, Desailly, Deschamps, Morris, Wise, Zola, Flo (Sutton 88).
Barcelona: Hesp - Puyol (Litmanen 46), Abelardo, F De Boer, Bogarde, Xavi, Gabri, Cocu, Figo, Rivaldo, Kluivert (Dani 72).

Valencia 5 (Angulo 2, Gerard Lopez 3, 39, 81, Claudio Lopez 90)
Lazio 2 (Inzaghi 27, Salas 86)
HT: 3-1. **Att:** 50,000. **Ref:** Milton Nielsen (Den)
Valencia: Canizares - Angloma, Djukic, Pellegrino, Carboni, Angulo, Farinos, Kily Gonzalez, Gerard Lopez, Sanchez (Oscar Garcia 82), Claudio Lopez.
Lazio: Ballotta - Negro, Mihajlovic, Gottardi, Pancaro, Almeyda, Simeone (Salas 76), Stankovic (Sergio Conceicao 62), Veron, Nedved, Inzaghi (Boksic 68).

UEFA CUP

SEMI-FINALS – 1ST LEGS

(April 6)

Arsenal 1 (Bergkamp 2)
Lens 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 38,102. **Ref:** Benko (Aut)
Arsenal: Seaman - Dixon, Keown, Silvinho, Grimandi, Vieira, Petit, Parlour, Bergkamp (Suker 83), Overmars (Ljungberg 74), Kanu.
Lens: Warmuz - Sikora, Coly, Mawene, Queudrue, Nyarko, Blanchard, Brunel, Moreira (Sakho 79), Nouma, Coridon.

Galatasaray 2 (Hakan Sukur 12, Capone 44)
Leeds United 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 30,000. **Ref:** Krug (Ger)
Galatasaray: Taffarel - Bulent, Popescu, Emre, Arif (Hasan Sas 78), Okan Buruk (Hakan Unsal 62), Suat Kaya, Hakan Sukur, Hagi (Ahmet 88), Capone, Ergun.
Leeds: Martyn - Kelly, Harte, Radebe, Woodgate, Bridges (Huckerby 75), Kewell, Bowyer, McPhail, Bakke, Jones (Wilcox 65).

AUSTRIA

Mar 24: Sturm Graz 3 SV Ried 2.
Mar 25: Bregenz 3 Grazer AK 1; Linz ASK 1 Rapid Wien 1; Salzburg 2 Lustenau 0.
Mar 26: Austria Wien 2 FC Tirol 0.
Apr 1: FC Tirol 2 Salzburg 1; Lustenau 2 Linz ASK 2; Rapid Wien 2 Grazer AK 0; SV Ried 2 Bregenz 0; Sturm Graz 3 Austria Wien 2.
Apr 7: Grazer AK 0 Rapid 4.
Apr 8: Austria Wien 0 Sturm Graz 1; Bregenz 0 SV Ried 4; Linz ASK 5 Lustenau 0; Salzburg 0 FC Tirol 1.
Apr 14: Sturm Graz 2 Linz ASK 0.
Apr 15: Austria Wien 2 Bregenz 5; FC Tirol 1 Grazer AK 0; Lustenau 0 Rapid 1; SV Ried 2 Salzburg 0.

AUSTRIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rapid	29	18	5	6	52	20	59
FC Tirol	29	18	5	6	42	24	59
Sturm Graz	29	17	7	5	55	24	58
SV Ried	29	13	6	10	47	30	45
Austria Wien	29	12	6	11	39	38	42
Grazer AK	29	11	4	14	33	44	37
Salzburg	29	9	8	12	27	34	35
Linz ASK	29	7	7	15	34	43	28
Bregenz	29	6	5	18	24	63	23
Lustenau	29	4	7	18	19	52	19

BELGIUM

Friday, March 24

Standard 0
Club Brugge 1 (Verheyen 18) Att: 25,000

Saturday, March 25

Beveren 1 (Nuhiji 7)
Geel 1 (Preisinger 54) Att: 4,000

Charleroi 1 (Rojas 55)
Lommel 1 (Scheepers 45) Att: 10,035

Genk 0
St Truiden 2 (Van Oekelen 45, Rudonja 51) Att: 20,400

Gent 1 (Dahlum 50)
Lokeren 1 (Youla 8) Att: 11,000

Mechelen 2 (Van Hout 36, Elias 81)
Eendracht Aalst 0 Att: 6,500

Mouscron 3 (Lawaree 32, Vidovic 69, Tanghe 77)
Lierse 3 (Laeremans 16, Rudy 45, Huysegems 90) Att: 10,000

Westerlo 3 (Pelic 57, Zelenka 78, T Brogno 90)
Germinal BA 2 (Van der Heyden 13, Degryse 75) Att: 5,500

Sunday, March 26

Harelbeke 2 (Wostijn 3, Diatel 70)
Anderlecht 2 (Van Diemen 32, Koller 77) Att: 9,000

Saturday, April 1

Anderlecht 5 (Baseggio 12, Radzinski 33, 59, Zetterberg 60, Anastasiou 81)
Mechelen 0 Att: 26,792

Club Brugge 3 (Janssen 27, Vermant pen 43, 71)
Charleroi 1 (Romaniuk 73) Att: 10,000

Eendracht Aalst 1 (Sarli pen 81)
Westerlo 1 (Pelic 48) Att: 4,000

Germinal BA 2 (Hofmans 18, Sonck 56)
Gent 0 Att: 6,000

Lierse 1 (Van Meir 41)
Beveren 3 (Van Rumst 50, Torken 80, Nykos 87) Att: 7,000

Lokeren 1 (Janssens 17)
Genk 2 (Ban 22, Gudjonsson 28) Att: 4,898

Lommel 0
Mouscron 4 (Dugardein 5, De Vleesschauwer 70, Vidovic 75, Lawaree 78) Att: 4,000

Sunday, April 2

Geel 3 (Daelemans pen 36, Benediktsson 83, Delen 90)
Harelbeke 2 (Mitsjkov 35, Sillah 56) Att: 4,000

St Truiden 2 (Teppers 24, Rudonja 70)
Standard 0 Att: 14,000

Friday, April 7

Lierse 2 (Laeremans 9, De Keyser 49)
Geel 2 (Szeker 31, Daelemans 35) Att: 8,000

Mouscron 1 (Tanghe 65)
Club Brugge 2 (Clement 31, Janssen 72) Att: 11,500

Standard 1 (Pierre 52)
Lokeren 2 (Janssens 59, Vonasek 68) Att: 12,000

Saturday, April 8

Charleroi 1 (D Brogno 77)
St Truiden 1 (Rudonja 28) Att: 12,000

Germinal BA 3 (Hofmans 37, Mutavdzic 39, Sonck 75)
Genk 0 Att: 7,000

Westerlo 5 (T Brogno pen 4, 50, Zelenka 23, Machiels 59, Pelic 85)
Anderlecht 0 Att: 10,400

Sunday, April 9

Beveren 1 (Torken 78)
Lommel 0 Att: 2,400

Gent 4 (Arst 29, 58, Dahlum 32, Dragutinovic 77)
Eendracht Aalst 0 Att: 6,200

Mechelen 4 (Van Hout 6, 42, Camus 19, Elias 58)
Harelbeke 0 Att: 5,500

Saturday, April 15

Eendracht Aalst 1 (Arts 6)
Genk 3 (Delbroek 40, Origi 53, T Gudjonsson 60)

Germinal BA 2 (Sonck pen 34, Severeyns 74)
Standard 0 Att: 9,000

Lokeren 1 (Youla 9)
Charleroi 1 (Rojas 80) Att: 3,464

Lommel 1 (Waligora 25)
Lierse 0 Att: 4,500

St Truiden 0
Mouscron 0

Sunday, April 16

Anderlecht 1 (Scifo 38)
Gent 2 (Arst 61, Dragutinovic 73) Att: 26,454

Club Brugge 3 (Fadiga 4, Janssen 15, Clement 66)
Beveren 1 (Sels 60) Att: 13,000

Geel 3 (Daelemans 14, 82, B Smits 88)
Mechelen 0 Att: 5,500

Harelbeke 3 (Paas 9, Vandewalle 72, Wostijn 75)
Westerlo 1 (T Brogno 19)

BELGIUM

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Anderlecht	31	20	8	3	79	34	68
Club Brugge	31	19	4	8	65	30	61
Gent	31	18	3	10	70	49	57
Standard	31	17	2	12	62	46	53
Mouscron	31	15	7	9	65	44	52
Germinal BA	31	15	7	9	52	40	52
Lierse	31	14	7	10	62	43	49
Genk	31	14	6	11	57	53	48
Westerlo	31	13	8	10	58	63	47
Mechelen	31	12	5	14	46	64	41
Lokeren	31	10	10	11	49	55	40
Eendracht Aalst	31	11	3	17	51	65	36
Beveren	31	9	8	14	45	56	35
Harelbeke	31	9	5	17	50	65	32
St Truiden	31	8	7	16	34	57	31
Geel	31	5	12	14	30	53	27
Charleroi	31	5	9	17	35	61	24
Lommel	31	4	11	16	29	61	23

LEADING GOALSCORERS

27	Ole-Martin Arst (Gent)
24	Toni Brogno (Westerlo)
19	Jan Koller (Anderlecht)
18	David Paas (Harelbeke)
15	Eric Van Meir (Lierse)
14	Par Zetterberg (Anderlecht)
14	Marcin Zewlakow (Mouscron)
13	Jochen Janssen (Club Brugge)
13	Sven Vermant (Club Brugge)

BULGARIA

Mar 25: Spartak Varna 2 Lok Sofia 1; Lev Sofia 2 Olympic-Beroe 0; Shumen 0 Belasitsa 1; Chernomorets 1 Lovech 1; Pirin 1 Neftohimik 0; Dobrudzha 3 Minjor 1.
Mar 26: Botev 1 Velbazhd 0; Slavia 0 CSKA 0.
Mar 31: Belasitsa 0 Lev Sofia 0.
Apr 1: Slavia 0 Spartak Varna 0; CSKA 4 Dobrudzha 1; Minjor 1 Botev 1; Velbazhd 3 Pirin 0; Chernomorets 0 Neftohimik 2; Shumen 6 Lovech 0; Olympic-Beroe 2 Lok Sofia 0.
Apr 9: Lev Sofia 1 Lovech 1; Spartak Varna 4 Olympic-Beroe 0; Lok Sofia 2 Belasitsa 0; Shumen 1 Neftohimik 1; Chernomorets 1 Velbazhd 1; Pirin 2 Minjor 0; Botev 1 CSKA 2; Dobrudzha 2 Slavia 0.

BULGARIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Lev Sofia	22	17	4	1	52	11	55
CSKA	22	16	2	4	44	18	50
Velbazhd	22	13	3	6	34	19	42
Neftohimik	22	11	7	4	29	14	40
Lovech	22	10	4	8	38	22	34
Lok Sofia	22	9	6	7	40	22	33
Slavia	22	9	6	7	26	25	33
Botev	22	10	2	10	30	29	32
Spartak Varna	22	9	4	9	28	33	31
Belasitsa	22	8	3	11	20	37	27
Olympic-Beroe	22	8	2	12	22	35	26
Chernomorets	22	6	6	10	21	31	24
Pirin	22	7	2	13	19	36	23
Dobrudzha	22	6	3	13	18	37	21
Minjor	22	5	2	15	24	43	17
Shumen	22	3	2	17	8	41	11

CROATIA

Mar 25: Hrvatski drag 0 Hajduk 0; Slaven 2 Dinamo 0; Vukovar '91 1 Osijek 1; Istra 2 Rijeka 1; Sibenik 2 Zagreb 1; Cibalia 2 Varteks 0.
Apr 1: Rijeka 2 Sibenik 0; Osijek 3 Istra 1; Varteks 0 Slaven 0; Dinamo 3 Hrvatski drag 0; Hajduk 4 Vukovar '91 0; Zagreb 1 Cibalia 2.
Apr 8: Istra 1 Hajduk 1; Vukovar '91 0 Dinamo 3; Hrvatski drag 0 Slaven 2; Cibalia 1 Rijeka 1; Sibenik 1 Osijek 1; Zagreb 1 Varteks 2.
Apr 11: Varteks 1 Hrvatski drag 1; Slaven 1 Vukovar '91 0; Dinamo 2 Istra 0; Osijek 3 Cibalia 0; Rijeka 2 Zagreb 3.
Apr 15: Cibalia 0 Hajduk 0; Zagreb 2 Osijek 2; Istra 0 Slaven 1; Sibenik 2 Dinamo 1; Vukovar '91 2 Hrvatski drag 0.

CROATIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dinamo	28	18	6	4	69	22	60
Hajduk	27	15	9	3	51	22	54
Osijek	28	14	7	7	50	39	49
Slaven	28	9	12	7	24	28	39
Cibalia	28	9	11	8	35	32	38
Rijeka	27	10	7	10	44	34	37
Zagreb	28	9	10	9	39	38	37
Varteks	27	9	7	11	27	35	34
Vukovar '91	28	6	8	14	22	42	26
Hrvatski drag	28	6	8	14	31	53	26
Sibenik	27	5	9	13	22	45	24
Istra	28	6	6	16	27	51	24

CZECH REP

Mar 24: Teplice 2 Bohemians 0.
Mar 25: Dukla 1 Ceske Budejovice 0; Sparta 3 Brno 0; Jablonec 2 Ostrava 2; Opava 0 Kralove 0; Zizkov 0 Liberec 0; Drnovice 2 Chmel Blsany 0.
Mar 26: Olomouc 0 Slavia 2.
Mar 31: Brno 2 Ceske Budejovice 0.
Apr 2: Olomouc 1 Dukla 0; Slavia 2 Drnovice 1; Chmel Blsany 0 Zizkov 2; Liberec 1 Opava 0; Kralove 0 Jablonec 0; Ostrava 2 Teplice 2; Bohemians 0 Sparta 1.
Apr 7: Zizkov 3 Slavia 1.
Apr 9: Dukla 1 Brno 2; Ceske Budejovice 1 Bohemians 2; Sparta 2 Ostrava 0; Teplice 1 Kralove 1; Jablonec 0 Liberec 0; Opava 0 Chmel Blsany 0; Drnovice 1 Olomouc 0.
Apr 14: Kralove 0 Sparta 2.
Apr 16: Drnovice 2 Dukla 1; Olomouc 2 Zizkov 0; Slavia 3 Opava 1; Chmel Blsany 1 Jablonec 2; Liberec 2 Teplice 0; Ostrava 1 Ceske Budejovice 1; Bohemians 0 Brno 0.

CZECH REP

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Slavia	25	20	4	1	47	15	64
Sparta	25	20	3	2	64	19	63
Drnovice	25	14	4	7	34	22	46
Bohemians	25	9	8	8	21	21	35
Brno	25	9	6	10	27	29	33
Liberec	25	7	11	7	16	16	32
Teplice	25	8	8	9	34	36	32
Chmel Blsany	25	9	4	12	23	38	31
Olomouc	25	6	11	8	27	31	29
Ostrava	25	6	10	9	35	39	28
Zizkov	25	7	7	11	33	40	28
Ceske Budejovice	25	8	4	13	28	38	28
Dukla	25	7	6	12	25	35	27
Opava	25	5	9	11	27	32	24
Jablonec	25	5	8	12	19	36	23
Kralove	25	3	11	11	18	31	20

DENMARK

Mar 26: AB 2 Silkeborg 0; AGF 2 Herfolge 3; AaB 1 OB 2; Brondby 2 Lyngby 2; Vejle 2 FC Copenhagen 7; Viborg 2 Esbjerg 3.
Mar 30: AGF 1 Esbjerg 0.
Apr 2: Esbjerg 0 AaB 0; Lyngby 3 AGF 0; OB 1 AB 1; Silkeborg 2 FC Copenhagen 1; Vejle 1 Brondby 1.
Apr 3: Herfølge 3 Viborg 2.
Apr 9: AB 3 Herfølge 0; AaB 1 Lyngby 1; FC Copenhagen 3 Esbjerg 1; Silkeborg 1 OB 0; Viborg 2 Brondby 2.
Apr 10: AGF 2 Vejle 0.
Apr 16: Brondby 2 AGF 0; Esbjerg 0 AB 0; Herfolge 0 AaB 2; Lyngby 1 Viborg 3; Vejle 2 Silkeborg 1.
Apr 17: OB 2 FC Copenhagen 0.

DENMARK

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Herfolge	24	13	4	7	38	35	43
Brondby	24	11	7	6	42	27	40
AB	24	10	8	6	37	27	38
Silkeborg	24	10	7	7	40	24	37
Lyngby	24	11	4	9	38	34	37
Viborg	24	10	6	8	36	35	36
AaB	24	8	11	5	35	26	35
FC Copenhagen	24	9	4	11	31	26	31
OB	24	6	9	9	21	29	27
AGF	24	6	6	12	22	37	24
Esbjerg	24	6	4	14	24	42	22
Vejle	24	4	10	10	26	48	22

ENGLAND

Saturday, March 25

Aston Villa 2 (Carbone 40, Boateng 57)
Derby 0 Att: 28.613

Bradford 0
Man Utd 4 (Yorke 37, 40, Scholes 71, Beckham 79) Att: 18,276

Chelsea 1 (Richards og 75)
Southampton 1 (Tessem 69) Att: 34,956

Liverpool 2 (Camara 51, Redknapp 88)
Newcastle 1 (Shearer 67) Att: 44,743

Middlesbrough 1 (Campbell 11)
Sheff Wed 0 Att: 32,748

Sunderland 2 (Summerbee 7, Phillips 77)
Everton 1 (Barmby 38) Att: 41,934

Watford 1 (Smart 78)
Tottenham 1 (Armstrong 51) Att: 20,050

Sunday, March 26

Arsenal 3 (Henry 50, Grimandi 79, Kanu 80)
Coventry 0 Att: 38,027

Leicester 2 (Collymore 14, Guppy 48)
Leeds 1 (Kewell 38) Att: 21,095

West Ham 2 (Di Canio 8, Kanoute 59)
Wimbledon 1 (Hughes 75) Att: 22,438

Saturday, April 1

Coventry 0
Liverpool 3 (Owen 23, 38, Heskey 78) Att: 23,098

Everton 4 (M Hughes 18, Moore 30, 36, S Hughes 86)
Watford 2 (Smart 35, Hyde 80) Att: 31,160

Leeds 0
Chelsea 1 (Harley 62) Att: 40,162

Man Utd 7 (Scholes 25, 51, pen 62, Irwin 27, Cole 45, Beckham 66, Solskjaer 73)
West Ham 1 (Wanchope 11) Att: 61,615

Newcastle 2 (Speed 5, Shearer 89)
Bradford 0 Att: 36,572

Southampton 1 (Le Tissier pen 89)
Sunderland 2 (Quinn 14, Phillips pen 87) Att: 15,245

Sunday, April 2

Derby 3 (Burley 15, Delap 45, Sturridge 45)
Leicester 0 Att: 25,763

Wimbledon 1 (Lund 12)
Arsenal 3 (Kanu 33, 41, Henry pen 89) Att: 25,858

Monday, April 3

Tottenham 2 (Armstrong 31, Ginola 83)
Middlesbrough 3 (Carr og 40, Ricard 64, 78) Att: 31,796

Wednesday, April 5

Sheffield Wed 0
Aston Villa 1 (Thompson 90) Att: 18,136

Saturday, April 8

Bradford 1 (Blake 77)
Southampton 2 (Marsden 56, Pahars 76) Att: 17,439

Leicester 1 (Taggart 8)
Everton 1 (Hutchison 27) Att: 18,705

Sunderland 2 (Quinn 54, Kilbane 82)
Wimbledon 1 (Hughes 73) Att: 41,592

Watford 0
Derby 0 Att: 16,579

Sunday, April 9

Aston Villa 1 (Joachim 41)
Leeds 0 Att: 33,889

Liverpool 2 (Berger 34, Owen 61)
Tottenham 0 Att: 44,536

Monday, April 10

Middlesbrough 3 (Campbell 19, Ince 86, Juninho 90)
Man Utd 4 (Giggs 46, Cole 60, Scholes 74, Fortune 87) Att: 34,775

Wednesday, April 12

Chelsea 2 (Hendry og 53, Zola 56)
Coventry 1 (McAllister 17) Att: 32,316

West Ham 2 (Wanchope 60, 89)
Newcastle 1 (Speed 47) Att: 25,817

Wimbledon 0
Sheffield Wed 2 (De Bilde 39, Sibon 87) Att: 8,248

Saturday, April 15

Coventry 2 (Ince og 32, Keane 61)
Middlesbrough 1 (Ziege pen 64) Att: 19,435

Derby 1 (Sturridge 85)
West Ham 2 (Wanchope 15, 32) Att: 31,202

Everton 4 (Pembridge 2, Unsworth pen 15, Barmby 54, Collins 82)
Bradford 0 Att: 31,646

Man Utd 4 (Solskjaer 3, 51, Butt 66, Berg 70)
Sunderland 0 Att: 61,612

Newcastle 0
Leicester 2 (Cottee 7, Savage 52) Att: 36,426

Sheffield Wed 1 (Jonk pen 51)
Chelsea 0 Att: 21,743

Southampton 2 (Davies 4, Pahars 75)
Watford 0 Att: 15,242

Tottenham 2 (Iversen 15, Armstrong 47)
Aston Villa 4 (Dublin pen 61, 68, Carbone 69, Wright 73) Att: 35,304

Sunday, April 16

Leeds 0
Arsenal 4 (Henry 21, Keown 70, Kanu 82, Overmars 90) Att: 39,307

Wimbledon 1 (Andersen 70)
Liverpool 2 (Heskey 37, 62) Att: 26,102

ENGLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Man Utd	33	23	7	3	84	39	76
Liverpool	33	19	8	6	51	25	65
Arsenal	32	18	6	8	60	32	60
Leeds	33	19	3	11	49	39	60
Chelsea	33	16	10	7	43	28	58
Aston Villa	34	15	10	9	41	29	55
Sunderland	33	14	9	10	52	51	51
West Ham	33	14	9	10	46	49	51
Everton	34	12	12	10	58	45	48
Leicester	32	13	6	13	46	47	45
Newcastle	33	12	7	14	53	48	43
Tottenham	33	12	7	14	49	44	43
Middlesbrough	33	12	7	14	39	48	43
Coventry	34	11	8	15	43	45	41
Southampton	33	11	7	15	41	55	40
Derby	33	8	8	17	37	48	32
Wimbledon	34	7	11	16	44	65	32
Sheffield Wed	33	7	6	20	30	58	27
Bradford	33	6	8	19	29	61	26
Watford	33	5	5	23	28	67	20

LEADING GOALSCORERS

27	Kevin Phillips (Sunderland)
19	Andy Cole (Man Utd)
19	Alan Shearer (Newcastle)
17	Dwight Yorke (Man Utd)
15	Michael Bridges (Leeds)
14	Steffen Iversen (Tottenham)
13	Paolo Di Canio (West Ham)
13	Thierry Henry (Arsenal)
13	Niall Quinn (Sunderland)

FA CUP – SEMI-FINALS

Apr 2: Bolton 0 Aston Villa 0 (aet)
Aston Villa on pens.
Apr 9: Chelsea 2 Newcastle 1.

FRANCE

Saturday, March 25

Bordeaux 2 (Pavon 50, Wiltord 90)
Nancy 1 (Viars 86) Att: 23,000

Metz 1 (Gaillot 83)
Saint-Etienne 1 (Mettomo 10) Att: 17,000

Montpellier 2 (Rui Pataca 40, 65)
Auxerre 0 Att: 7,000

Paris SG 2 (Yanovski 35, L Leroy 75)
Le Havre 1 (Mamouni 28) Att: 43,000

Rennes 3 (Nonda 42, 46, Leroux 50)
Lens 0 Att: 12,000

Strasbourg 2 (Garay 62, Dorn 90)
Marseille 1 (Bakayoko 67) Att: 34,000

Troyes 1 (Djukic 38)
Bastia 0 Att: 10,000

Sunday, March 26

Lyon 2 (Malbranque 49, Anderson 90)
Sedan 0 Att: 35,000

Monaco 2 (Prso 21, Giuly 25)
Nantes 0 Att: 6,000

Friday, April 7

Marseille 4 (Pouget 30, Bakayoko 55, 79, Brando 90)
Monaco 2 (Trezeguet 60, 70) Att: 55,000

Sedan 0
Bordeaux 1 (Dugarry 90) Att: 16,474

Saturday, April 8

Auxerre 1 (Guivarc'h 35)
Nantes 1 (Sibierski 48) Att: 15,000

Bastia 4 (Andre 17, 45, Nalis 73, Nee 75)
Rennes 2 (Nonda 35, Le Roux 63) Att: 6,000

Le Havre 0
Lyon 1 (Anderson 24) Att: 17,000

Montpellier 2 (Gouveia 14, Maoulida 19)
Troyes 2 (Saifi 83, Lobe 89) Att: 12,000

Nancy 2 (Cascarino 53, 68)
Strasbourg 3 (Luyindula 45, 75, Bertin 87) Att: 15,000

Saint-Etienne 1 (Masudi 37)
Paris SG 1 (L Robert 26) Att: 33,000

Sunday, April 9

Lens 1 (Sikora 35)
Metz 0 Att: 38,000

Friday, April 14

Lyon 0
Saint-Etienne 0 Att: 39,218

Paris SG 4 (L Leroy 34, 50, 85, Robert 45)
Lens 1 (Rodriguez 38) Att: 44,436

Saturday, April 15

Bordeaux 3 (Alicarte pen 20, pen 75, Saveljic 88)
Le Havre 0 Att: 32,187

Metz 1 (Schemmel 46)
Bastia 1 (Prince 90) Att: 18,095

Monaco 2 (Simone 12, Prso 90)
Nancy 2 (Rambo 10, Lefevre 40) Att: 13,000

Nantes 0
Marseille 0 Att: 36,000

Rennes 1 (Nonda 35)
Montpellier 3 (Maoulida 5, Rui Pataca 62, Silvestre 82) Att: 14.357

Strasbourg 1 (Echouafni 55)
Sedan 1 (Di Rocco 85) Att: 23,032

Troyes 2 (Jbari 63, Boutal 82)
Auxerre 0 Att: 17,333

FRANCE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Monaco	31	19	5	7	62	31	62
Lyon	31	15	7	9	38	35	52
Paris SG	31	14	9	8	47	37	51
Bordeaux	31	14	8	9	48	36	50
Bastia	31	11	11	9	40	34	44
Sedan	31	12	8	11	39	40	44
Auxerre	31	12	7	12	31	35	43
Strasbourg	31	12	7	12	41	48	43
Saint-Etienne	31	11	9	11	41	44	42
Rennes	31	11	7	13	42	43	40
Lens	31	11	7	13	33	37	40
Marseille	31	9	12	10	39	39	39
Troyes	31	12	3	16	32	47	39
Metz	31	7	17	7	34	30	38
Nantes	31	10	7	14	36	38	37
Nancy	31	9	8	14	37	42	35
Le Havre	31	9	7	15	28	45	34
Montpellier	31	7	9	15	37	44	30

LEADING GOALSCORERS

20	Sonny Anderson (Lyon)
20	David Trezeguet (Monaco)
17	Marco Simone (Monaco)
16	Shabani Nonda (Rennes)
15	Christian (Paris SG)
13	Alex (Saint-Etienne)
13	Lilian Laslandes (Bordeaux)
13	Antoine Sibierski (Nantes)
12	Tony Cascarino (Nancy)
12	Stephane Guivarc'h (Auxerre)
12	Sylvain Wiltord (Bordeaux)
10	Frederic Nee (Bastia)
9	Olivier Echouafni (Strasbourg)

FRENCH CUP – SEMI-FINALS

Apr 12: Calais 3 Bordeaux 1 (aet); Monaco 0 Nantes 1.

LEAGUE CUP – SEMI-FINALS

Apr 1: Paris SG 4 Bastia 2.
Apr 3: Red Star 2 Gueugnon 2
Gueugnon on pens.

GERMANY

Friday, March 24

Arminia Bielefeld 2 (Maul 55, Stratos pen 77)
Hansa Rostock 2 (Lantz 19, Wibran 66) Att: 19,118

Unterhaching 1 (Strehmel 84)
Ulm 0 Att: 10,000

Saturday, March 25

Bayer Leverkusen 1 (Emerson 53)
Freiburg 1 (Kobiashwili 3) Att: 22,500

Bayern Munich 2 (Elber 22, 61)
Kaiserslautern 2 (Djorkaeff 20, Reich 30) Att: 63,000

Duisburg 2 (Drsek 28, Zeyer pen 78)
Wolfsburg 3 (Akpoborie 62, Juskowiak 82, Munteanu 84) Att: 9,475

Hamburg 2 (Prager 45, Cardoso 53)
1860 Munich 0 Att: 43,212

Stuttgart 1 (Dundee 61)
Hertha 0 Att: 24,000

Sunday, March 26

Schalke 0
Eintracht Frankfurt 0 Att: 42,335

Werder Bremen 3 (Ailton 32, Maximov 40, Bogdanovic 50)
Borussia Dortmund 2 (Reina 22, But 56) Att: 33,245

Friday, March 31

Freiburg 4 (Sellimi pen 5, Kobiashwili 50, Baya 61, Ramdane 77)
Unterhaching 3 (Breitenreiter 42, 71, Seitz 65) Att: 23,793

Ulm 0
Duisburg 3 (Beierle 33, Hirsch 38, Spies 76) Att: 24,500

Saturday, April 1

Borussia Dortmund 0
Hamburg 1 (Prager 79) Att: 68,600

Eintracht Frankfurt 2 (Zampach 39, Schur 73)
Arminia Bielefeld 1 (Weissenberger 60) Att: 26,700

Hertha 2 (Alves 16, Preetz 52)
Schalke 1 (Sand 45) Att: 50,249

1860 Munich 1 (Schroth 55)
Bayer Leverkusen 2 (Rink 46, Kirsten 52) Att: 34,800

Wolfsburg 1 (Juskowiak 60)
Bayern Munich 1 (Jancker 28) Att: 20,400

Sunday, April 2

Hansa Rostock 1 (Wibran pen 35)
Werder Bremen 1 (Bode 36) Att: 15,600

Kaiserslautern 1 (Djorkaeff 26)
Stuttgart 2 (Dundee 28, Balakov pen 77) Att: 41,500

Friday, April 7

Hamburg 1 (Groth 18)
Hansa Rostock 0 Att: 44,180

Unterhaching 1 (Seifert 47)
1860 Munich 1 (Agostino 90) Att: 11,000

Saturday, April 8

Bayer Leverkusen 3 (Rink 42, 84, Brdaric 90)
Borussia Dortmund 1 (Reina 2) Att: 22,500

Bayern Munich 4 (Scholl 20, Paulo Sergio pen 23, Jancker 63, Wojchiechovski 83)
Ulm 0 Att: 63,000

Hertha 1 (Preetz 37)
Eintracht Frankfurt 0 Att: 42,863

Schalke 1 (Latal 17)
Kaiserslautern 2 (Tare 5, Pettersson 44) Att: 46,300

Stuttgart 2 (Kuka 8, Soldo 30)
Wolfsburg 5 (Akpoborie 10, 67, 85, Juskowiak 22, Sebescen 90) Att: 29,000

Sunday, April 9

Duisburg 1 (Wohlert 67)
Freiburg 2 (Iashwili 48, Weisshaupt 88) Att: 12,500

Werder Bremen 3 (Frings 21, 54, Herzog pen 41)
Arminia Bielefeld 1 (J Bode 65) Att: 29,400

Tuesday, April 11

Borussia Dortmund 1 (Ricken 27)
Unterhaching 3 (Seitz 7, Strehmel 49, Schwarz 58) Att: 61,500

Kaiserslautern 1 (Pettersson 11)
Hertha 2 (Alves 8, Preetz 84) Att: 39,268

Ulm 1 (Leandro 71)
Stuttgart 1 (Bordon 3) Att: 23,500

Wolfsburg 0
Schalke 0 Att: 17,000

Wednesday, April 12

Arminia Bielefeld 3 (Labbadia 7, Stratos pen 66, Goktan 75)
Hamburg 0 Att: 16,500

Eintracht Frankfurt 1 (Heldt pen 70)
Werder Bremen 0 Att: 30,000

Freiburg 1 (Kobiashvili 11)
Bayern Munich 2 (Jancker 23, Scholl pen 87) Att: 25,000

Hansa Rostock 1 (Breitkreutz 45)
Bayer Leverkusen 1 (Schneider 65) Att: 15,000

1860 Munich 4 (Max 3, 43, Agostino 29, 81)
Duisburg 1 (Tofting 84) Att: 12,500

Friday, April 14

Hertha 0
Wolfsburg 0 Att: 35,000

Schalke 0
Ulm 0 Att: 30,000

Saturday, April 15

Bayern Munich 1 (Scholl 29)
1860 Munich 2 (Max 22, Jeremies og 40) Att: 69,000

Duisburg 2 (Guvenisik 6, Zeyer pen 44)
Borussia Dortmund 2 (Addo 13, Worns 25) Att: 24,000

Hamburg 0
Werder Bremen 0 Att: 52,800

Kaiserslautern 1 (Reich 57)
Eintracht Frankfurt 0 Att: 41,500

Stuttgart 1 (Ganea 81)
Freiburg 0 Att: 20,000

Sunday, April 16

Bayer Leverkusen 4 (Beinlich 11, Kirsten 22, Ballack 38, Rink pen 51)
Arminia Bielefeld 1 (Meissner pen 66) Att: 22,500

Unterhaching 1 (Seifert 78)
Hansa Rostock 1 (Kovacec 90) Att: 10,000

GERMANY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bayer Leverkusen	30	18	10	2	65	32	64
Bayern Munich	30	18	7	5	62	26	61
Hamburg	30	15	10	5	59	33	55
1860 Munich	30	13	8	9	49	43	47
Hertha	30	12	10	8	37	41	46
Kaiserslautern	30	14	4	12	44	51	46
Werder Bremen	30	12	8	10	59	45	44
Wolfsburg	30	10	13	7	46	49	43
Stuttgart	30	13	4	13	35	40	43
Unterhaching	30	10	8	12	37	38	38
Schalke	30	8	13	9	38	37	37
B Dortmund	30	7	12	11	35	35	33
Freiburg	30	8	9	13	40	46	33
Eintracht	30	9	5	16	32	39	32
Hansa Rostock	30	6	14	10	37	51	32
Ulm	30	8	8	14	31	53	32
A Bielefeld	30	5	8	17	33	55	23
Duisburg	30	4	9	17	35	60	21

LEADING GOALSCORERS

16	Martin Max (1860 Munich)
15	Ulf Kirsten (Bayer Leverkusen)
13	Ebbe Sand (Schalke)
12	Ailton (Werder Bremen)
12	Jonathan Akpoborie (Wolfsburg)
12	Michael Preetz (Hertha)
11	Marco Bode (Werder Bremen)
11	Youri Djorkaeff (Kaiserslautern)
11	Giovane Elber (Bayern Munich)
10	Stefan Beinlich (Bayer Leverkusen)
10	Andrzej Juskowiak (Wolfsburg)
10	Adel Sellimi (Freiburg)
10	Paulo Sergio (Bayern Munich)

GREECE

Mar 25: Aris 1 AEK 1.
Mar 26: Kalamata 2 Iraklis 2; Panionios 2 Proodeftiki 1; Paniliakos 2 Ethnikos A 0; Apollon 0 Panahaiki 0; Kavala 1 Xanthi 0; Trikala 1 OFI 1; Olympiakos 2 Panathinaikos 2.
Mar 27: Ionikos 1 PAOK 0.
Apr 1: OFI 1 AEK 2.
Apr 2: Panionios 2 Kalamata 0; Iraklis 3 Paniliakos 1; Proodeftiki 2 Apollon 0; Panahaiki 3 Kavala 2; Panathinaikos 5 Ionikos 0; Xanthi 3 Trikala 0; PAOK 3 Aris 2.
Apr 3: Ethnikos A 1 Olympiakos 1.
Apr 11: Kalamata 2 Paniliakos 1; Kavala 2 Proodeftiki 1.
Apr 12: Apollon 2 Panionios 1; Olympiakos 1 Iraklis 0; Ionikos 3 Ethnikos A 0; Trikala 0 Panahaiki 1; Aris 0 Panathinaikos 2; AEK 4 Xanthi 1; PAOK 2 OFI 2.
Apr 16: Apollon 1 Kalamata 2; Paniliakos 0 Olympiakos 3; Panionios 1 Kavala 1; Iraklis 3 Ionikos 2; Proodeftiki 1 Trikala 0; Ethnikos A 1 Aris 0; Panahaiki 1 AEK 1.
Apr 17: Panathinaikos 3 OFI 2; Xanthi 1 PAOK 2.

GREECE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Olympiakos	28	24	2	2	74	17	74
Panathinaikos	28	23	4	1	74	20	73
OFI	28	14	9	5	47	36	51
AEK	28	14	6	8	51	35	48
Iraklis	28	13	4	11	49	47	43
PAOK	28	11	9	8	47	36	42
Panionios	28	13	2	13	43	47	41
Aris	28	11	7	10	39	35	40
Xanthi	28	10	8	10	31	35	38
Ionikos	28	9	10	9	36	39	37
Kalamata	28	8	8	12	30	48	32
Paniliakos	28	9	4	15	33	41	31
Panahaiki	28	7	10	11	29	37	31
Ethnikos A	28	9	4	15	24	41	31
Kavala	28	8	6	14	30	48	30
Proodeftiki	28	5	7	16	22	41	22
Apollon	28	4	6	18	19	43	18
Trikala	28	4	6	18	24	56	18

HOLLAND

Friday, March 24

AZ 2 (Fertout 24, Van Galen 90)
Den Bosch 0 Att: 6,450

Fortuna 3 (Gerritsen 2, 27, Amoah 74)
MVV 1 (Mutsaers 23) Att: 9,056

Willem II 0
PSV 0 Att: 14,700

Saturday, March 25

Cambuur 2 (Van Utrecht 18, Tammer 52)
Roda JC 2 (Doomernik 37, Luypers 60) Att: 7,500

De Graafschap 2 (Ax 14, Meerdink 25)
RKC 0 Att: 9,100

Vitesse 3 (Kreek 16, Trustfull 35, Laros pen 89)
Heerenveen 1 (Jensen 34) Att: 26,500

Sunday, March 26

Ajax 5 (Laudrup 35, Machlas 52, 65, Gronkjaer 63, Knopper 86)
NEC 2 (De Gier 33, 39) Att: 37,500

Feyenoord 1 (Tomasson 5)
Sparta 2 (Nielsen 40, Boukhari 85) Att: 32,000

Twente 4 (Ter Avest 78, Houwing 85, Vennegoor of Hesselink 89, Van der Meyde 90)
Utrecht 2 (Martel 44, 69) Att: 13,200

Friday, March 31

Den Bosch 1 (Vos 37)
Willem II 1 (Schulp 45) Att: 4,250

Heerenveen 1 (Lurling pen 86)
NEC 0 Att: 13,800

Roda JC 3 (Doomernik 28, Peeters 30, Tchoutang 65)
Ajax 0 Att: 9,160

Saturday, April 1

De Graafschap 1 (Den Turk 7)
Fortuna Sittard 0 Att: 10,250

MVV 0
Vitesse 2 (Jochemsen 18, Sikora 29) Att: 5,400

PSV 5 (Bruggink 20, Stinga 23, Lindenbergh og 28, Bouma 70, Kolkka 90)
AZ 1 (Ricksen 43) Att: 29,000

Sunday, April 2

RKC 2 (Van Wanrooy 49, Y Cornelisse 75)
Feyenoord 2 (Bosvelt 36, Samardzic 76) Att: 6,200

Sparta 1 (Nielsen 45)
Twente 1 (Booth 46) Att: 8,960

Utrecht 1 (Kuijt 86)
Cambuur 2 (Van Utrecht 46, Nelisse pen 75) Att: 11,500

Friday, April 7

AZ 2 (Bosman pen 56, Van Galen 75)
De Graafschap 0 Att: 6,850

Fortuna 0
PSV 4 (Bruggink 7, Nilis 15, 63, 75) Att: 13,000

NEC 0
Roda JC 0 Att: 8,500

Saturday, April 8

Cambuur 1 (Ferrier 32)
Den Bosch 2 (Vos 11, 27) Att: 9,250

Twente 1 (Ter Avest 51)
MVV 2 (Gudjonsson 46, Van der Weert 66) Att: 13,200

Willem II 0
Vitesse 4 (Kreek 51, Van den Brom 61, Laros 63, 71) Att: 14,600

Sunday, April 9

Ajax 3 (Arveladze 14, Verlaat 60, Laudrup pen 73)
Sparta 2 (Nielsen 29, Marbus 50) Att: 35,000

Feyenoord 1 (Cruz pen 58)
Utrecht 2 (Groenendijk 22, Kuijt 89) Att: 31,500

RKC 0
Heerenveen 1 (Huizingh 78) Att: 5,500

Friday, April 14

Utrecht 3 (Dijkhuizen 55, Kuijt 60, Robbemond pen 83)
Sparta 1 (Marbus 58) Att: 12,000

Saturday, April 15

Heerenveen 3 (Lurling 18, Nurmela 44, G De Nooijer 65)
Fortuna 0 Att: 13,900

MVV 0
RKC 1 (Nwakire 71) Att: 6,000

Roda JC 3 (Peeters pen 38, Rudge 45, Zafarin 56)
Willem II 4 (Ramzi 26, 90, Galasek 66, Landzaat pen 88) Att: 7,250

Vitesse 4 (Van Hooijdonk 44, Grujic og 68, Zongo 75, Ter Avest og 76)
Twente 1 (Vennegoor of Hesselink 18) Att: 25,000

Sunday, April 16

Ajax 4 (Arveladze 45, 65, Gronkjaer 72, Winter 90)
AZ 1 (Bosman 44) Att: 30,000

De Graafschap 0
Feyenoord 1 (Cruz 61) Att: 10,900

Den Bosch 1 (Van der Laan pen 9)
NEC 1 (Janssen 1) Att: 4,300

PSV 1 (Van Bommel 71)
Cambuur 0 Att: 30,000

HOLLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
PSV	30	23	3	4	91	22	72
Heerenveen	30	19	3	8	56	33	60
Ajax	29	17	5	7	68	43	56
Vitesse	30	16	8	6	61	40	56
Feyenoord	30	16	8	6	57	37	56
Twente	30	15	11	4	49	30	56
AZ	30	16	4	10	62	50	52
Roda JC	30	13	7	10	53	43	46
Willem II	30	12	7	11	47	56	43
Utrecht	30	13	3	14	51	54	42
RKC	30	11	5	14	39	57	38
Sparta	30	10	4	16	44	62	34
De Graafschap	30	8	8	14	35	47	32
Fortuna	30	8	7	15	39	50	31
NEC	30	6	6	18	34	56	24
MVV	30	5	6	19	35	64	21
Den Bosch	29	3	8	18	26	69	17
Cambuur	30	3	7	20	27	61	16

LEADING GOALSCORERS
29 Ruud Van Nistelrooy (PSV)
22 Pierre Van Hooijdonk (Vitesse)
17 Anthony Lurling (Heerenveen)
16 John Bosman (AZ)
16 Arnold Bruggink (PSV)
16 Luc Nilis (PSV)
16 Vennegoor of Hesselink (Twente)
14 Nikos Machlas (Ajax)
14 Bob Peeters (Roda JC)
13 Julio Cruz (Feyenoord)
13 Richard Knopper (Ajax)
12 Brian Laudrup (Ajax)

DUTCH CUP – SEMI-FINALS

Apr 11: AZ 1 NEC 1 (aet) *NEC on pens.*
Apr 12: Vitesse 0 Roda JC 1 (aet).

HUNGARY

Mar 24: Gyor 3 Ujpest 1; Kispest-Honved 0 MTK 2.
Mar 25: Ferencvaros 2 Dunaferr 2; Tatabanya 1 Debrecen 1; Nagykanizsa 2 Diosgyor 1; Nyiregyhaza 3 Siofok 0; Haladas 0 Zalaegerszeg 1; Vasas 4 Gazszer 0.
Mar 31: Vac 2 Haladas 4; Zalaegerszeg 0 Vasas 0.
Apr 1: Dunaferr 2 Kispest-Honved 0; Nyiregyhaza 3 Ferencvaros 0; Diosgyor 0 Siofok 0; Debrecen 3 Nagykanizsa 0; Gazszer 1 Gyor 1; Ujpest 0 Tatabanya 1.
Apr 4: Kispest-Honved 0 Nyiregyhaza 1; Haladas 0 MTK 4; Vasas 3 Vac 0.
Apr 5: Gazszer 2 Zalaegerszeg 2; Nagykanizsa 1 Ujpest 1; Siofok 4 Debrecen 1; Ferencvaros 2 Diosgyor 0; Gyor 0 Tatabanya 1.
Apr 7: MTK 0 Vasas 0.
Apr 8: Dunaferr 2 Haladas 1; Tatabanya 1 Nagykanizsa 0; Vac 1 Gazszer 2; Debrecen 3 Ferencvaros 0; Ujpest 2 Siofok 0; Zalaegerszeg 2 Gyor 1.
Apr 9: Diosgyor 1 Kispest-Honved 3.
Apr 14: Vasas 0 Dunaferr 2; Kispest-Honved 1 Debrecen 0.
Apr 15: Siofok 1 Tatabanya 3; Gazszer 0 MTK 1; Ferencvaros 0 Ujpest 0; Haladas 1 Nyiregyhaza 1; Gyor 4 Nagykanizsa 0; Zalaegerszeg 1 Vac 2.

HUNGARY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dunaferr	25	17	7	1	55	20	58
MTK	25	14	8	3	47	19	50
Vasas	25	15	4	6	47	22	49
Tatabanya	26	11	10	5	28	29	43
Debrecen	26	11	7	8	37	31	40
Ferencvaros	26	10	8	8	45	31	38
Ujpest	26	10	8	8	44	33	38
Nyiregyhaza	25	10	6	9	29	34	36
Zalaegerszeg	25	8	11	6	28	19	35
Gyor	25	9	7	9	40	26	34
Kispest-Honved	26	9	6	11	25	33	33
Gazszer	25	7	10	8	28	39	31
Nagykanizsa	26	5	8	13	20	37	23
Haladas	25	6	4	15	26	43	22
Diosgyor	25	5	6	14	22	44	21
Siofok*	26	6	5	15	21	43	20
Vac	25	3	5	17	22	61	14

**3 pts deducted*

ITALY

Friday, March 24

Milan 2 (Shevchenko 45, pen 84)
Juventus 0 Att: 82,146

Saturday, March 25

Bologna 2 (Signori 30, Nervo 32)
Udinese 1 (Muzzi 67) Att: 25,703

Cagliari 2 (Berretta 52, De Patre 63)
Parma 3 (Fuser 3, Amoroso 4, Stanic 81) Att: 15,860

Lazio 2 (Nedved 25, Veron 28)
Roma 1 (Montella 3) Att: 74,076

Lecce 1 (Sesa 24)
Inter 0 Att: 28,847

Perugia 1 (Rapajic 15)
Fiorentina 2 (Batistuta 8, Chiesa 69) Att: 10,399

Piacenza 2 (Gilardino 2, Piovani 83)
Venezia 2 (Valtolina 5, Berg 12) Att: 8,193

Reggina 1 (Kallon 24)
Bari 0 Att: 24,196

Torino 0
Verona 3 (Melis 18, Cammarata 34, 40) Att: 19,771

Saturday, April 1

Fiorentina 2 (Batistuta 38, 89)
Bologna 2 (Signori 12, Andersson 57) Att: 34,242

Juventus 0
Lazio 1 (Simeone 66) Att: 54,492

Sunday, April 2

Bari 1 (Andersson 22)
Cagliari 0 Att: 14,033

Inter 1 (Recoba 13)
Reggina 1 (Possanzini 82) Att: 67,300

Parma 1 (Crespo 69)
Milan 0 Att: 23,872

Perugia 1 (Amoruso 21)
Torino 0 Att: 10,243

Roma 1 (Nakata 38)
Udinese 1 (Sosa 51) Att: 48,037

Venezia 0
Lecce 0 Att: 8,858

Verona 1 (Brocchi 68)
Piacenza 0 Att: 18,026

Saturday, April 8

Torino 2 (Sommese 19, Silenzi 75)
Parma 2 (Crespo 51, Amoroso 74) Att: 13,233

Udinese 3 (Sosa 5, 45, 67)
Inter 0 Att: 28,000

Sunday, April 9

Bologna 0
Juventus 2 (Kovacevic 89, Paganin og 90) Att: 22,484

Cagliari 0
Verona 1 (Falsini 39) Att: 15,000

Lazio 1 (Lombardo 47)
Perugia 0 Att: 42,990

Lecce 0
Roma 0 Att: 16,343

Milan 1 (Leonardo 76)
Fiorentina 1 (Di Livio 71) Att: 55,485

Piacenza 2 (Gilardino 29, Gautieri 60)
Bari 1 (Andersson 68) Att: 8,000

Reggina 1 (Bogdani 66)
Venezia 0 Att: 23,960

Saturday, April 15

Fiorentina 3 (Batistuta 24, 90, Chiesa 54)
Lazio 3 (Nedved 27, Boksic 30, Mihajlovic pen 89) Att: 39,000

Verona 2 (Apolloni 73, Cammarata 76)
Udinese 2 (Fiore 48, 61) Att: 15,023

Sunday, April 16

Bari 3 (Spinesi 3, Osmanovski 12, Cassano 33)
Lecce 1 (Sesa pen 79) Att: 30,000

Cagliari 0
Reggina 1 (Cozza 44) Att: 12,000

Inter 1 (Seedorf 83)
Juventus 2 (Kovacevic 55, 79) Att: 79,000

Parma 3 (Crespo 32, 89, Di Vaio 90)
Venezia 1 (Budan 19) Att: 18,000

Perugia 2 (Materazzi 16, Rapajic 74)
Piacenza 0 Att: 10,000

Roma 2 (Montella pen 26, Totti pen 60)
Bologna 0 Att: 49,522

Torino 2 (Pinga 30, 69)
Milan 2 (Ambrosini 15, Guglielminpietro 77) Att: 25,000

ITALY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Juventus	30	19	8	3	44	17	65
Lazio	30	17	9	4	53	29	60
Parma	30	15	8	7	48	35	53
Milan	30	13	12	5	57	38	51
Roma	30	14	8	8	54	31	50
Inter	30	14	7	9	51	31	49
Udinese	30	12	9	9	53	40	45
Fiorentina	30	10	12	8	38	37	42
Reggina	30	9	12	9	28	34	39
Perugia	30	11	6	13	32	46	39
Verona	30	9	10	11	33	40	37
Bologna	30	8	11	11	25	32	35
Bari	30	9	7	14	32	44	34
Lecce	30	8	10	12	28	40	34
Torino	30	6	11	13	30	43	29
Venezia	30	6	7	17	26	51	25
Cagliari	30	3	11	16	25	47	20
Piacenza	30	4	8	18	17	39	20

LEADING GOALSCORERS
21 Hernan Crespo (Parma)
21 Andrii Shevchenko (Milan)
18 Gabriel Batistuta (Fiorentina)
17 Vincenzo Montella (Roma)
15 Filippo Inzaghi (Juventus)
14 Marco Ferrante (Torino)
14 Cristiano Lucarelli (Lecce)
13 Christian Vieri (Inter)
12 Roberto Muzzi (Udinese)
11 Marco Delvecchio (Roma)
11 Marcelo Salas (Lazio)
10 Oliver Bierhoff (Milan)
10 Mohamed Kallon (Reggina)
10 Giuseppe Signori (Bologna)

ITALIAN CUP – FINAL, 1ST LEG

Apr 12 - Stadio Olimpico
Lazio 2 (Nedved 40, Simeone 52)
Inter 1 (Seedorf 8)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 40,000. **Ref:** Trentalange (Pellegrino)

NORWAY

Apr 8: Stabaek 0 Rosenborg 2.
Apr 9: Bryne 4 Start 2; Haugesund 2 Bodo/Glimt 2; Lillestrom 1 Molde 1; Moss 0 Odd Grenland 0; Valerenga 4 Tromso 1; Brann 4 Viking 1.
Apr 15: Viking 1 Lillestrom 1.
Apr 16: Bodo/Glimt 0 Valerenga 0; Molde 2 Haugesund 1; Odd Grenland 2 Stabaek 0; Start 1 Moss 1; Tromso 3 Bryne 0; Rosenborg 4 Brann 4.

NORWAY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Brann	2	1	1	0	8	5	4
Valerenga	2	1	1	0	4	1	4
Rosenborg	2	1	1	0	6	4	4
Odd Grenland	2	1	1	0	2	0	4
Molde	2	1	1	0	3	2	4
Tromso	2	1	0	1	4	4	3
Bryne	2	1	0	1	4	5	3
Bodo/Glimt	2	0	2	0	2	2	2
Lillestrom	2	0	2	0	2	2	2
Moss	2	0	2	0	1	1	2
Haugesund	2	0	1	1	3	4	1
Start	2	0	1	1	3	5	1
Viking	2	0	1	1	2	5	1
Stabaek	2	0	0	2	0	4	0

POLAND

Mar 25: Lech 1 Legia 2; Amica 1 Odra 0; Gornik 0 Widzew 1; LKS 1 R Radzionkow 0; Wisla 3 Groclin 0; R Chorzow 2 Pogon 2; Polonia 2 Halex 0.
Mar 26: Zaglebie 5 Petro Plock 0.
Apr 1: Halex 0 R Chorzow 0; Polonia 5 Lech 0; Odra 0 Legia 2; Pogon 3 Wisla 3; Groclin 2 LKS 1; R Radzionkow 1 Gornik 0; Petro Plock 0 Amica 0; Widzew 2 Zaglebie 1.
Apr 7: Amica 2 Widzew 0.
Apr 8: Legia 1 Petro Plock 0; Gornik 1 Groclin 2; LKS 4 Pogon 3; Wisla 4 Halex 2; Lech 0 Odra 1; R Chorzow 2 Polonia 2.
Apr 9: Zaglebie 3 R Radzionkow 3.
Apr 15: R Chorzow 2 Lech 0; Halex 1 LKS 0; Pogon 0 Gornik 1; R Radzionkow 0 Amica 2; Petro Plock 0 Odra 1; Widzew 3 Legia 2.
Apr 16: Polonia 2 Wisla 1; Groclin 1 Zaglebie 0.

POLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Polonia	23	15	5	3	40	20	50
R Chorzow	23	12	9	2	42	21	45
Legia	23	11	10	2	43	24	43
Wisla	23	11	7	5	45	31	40
Amica	23	9	9	5	34	25	36
Pogon	23	8	9	6	37	35	33
Widzew	23	8	6	9	31	35	30
Halex	23	7	9	7	25	33	30
Zaglebie	23	7	8	8	27	27	29
Odra	23	8	5	10	25	27	29
Petro Plock	23	7	6	10	23	33	27
R Radzionkow	23	7	4	12	24	36	25
Gornik	23	5	8	10	29	29	23
LKS	23	5	7	11	21	28	22
Lech	23	4	6	13	27	44	18
Groclin	23	5	2	16	17	42	17

PORTUGAL

Friday, March 24

Campomaiorense 0
Sporting Lisbon 2 (Acosta 43, pen 64)

Saturday, March 25

Belenenses 2 (Filgueira 30, Seba 51)
Guimaraes 0

FC Porto 3 (Jardel 22, 45, Capucho 57)
Maritimo 2 (Iliev 10, Toedtli 33)

Sporting Braga 3 (Tailson 16, Jose Nuno 81, Odair 87)
Benfica 2 (Sabry pen 43, Nuno Gomes 53)

Sunday, March 26

Alverca 2 (Diogo 6, Duda 45)
Salgueiros 0

Boavista 2 (Whelliton 6, Rogerio 34)
Santa Clara 1 (El Idrissi 68)

Estrela Amadora 1 (Verona 13)
Farense 1 (Hajry 38)

Gil Vicente 2 (Tavares 42, Carlitos pen 87)
Vitoria Setubal 0

Rio Ave 0
Uniao Leiria 0

Friday, March 31

Vitoria Setubal 2 (Mamede 3, Helio pen 88)
Boavista 1 (Demetrios 82)

Saturday, April 1

Benfica 1 (Sabry 67)
FC Porto 0

Santa Clara 4 (Ricardo Sousa 31, 36, George 54, Prokopenko pen 71)
Alverca 3 (Rui Borges 28, 69, Duda 89)

Sunday, April 2

Estrela Amadora 1 (Raul Oliveira 77)
Rio Ave 0

Guimaraes 0
Uniao Leiria 1 (Paulo Duarte 14)

Maritimo 1 (Iliev 72)
Campomaiorense 0

Salgueiros 1 (Basilio 40)
Sporting Braga 1 (Barroso 24)

Sporting Lisbon 1 (Acosta 55)
Belenenses 0

Monday, April 3

Farense 0
Gil Vicente 3 (Auri 18, Fangueiro 36, Guga 85)

Friday, April 7

Rio Ave 1 (Hugo Henrique 83)
Guimaraes 1 (Marcio Theodoro 85)

Uniao Leiria 1 (Paulo Alves 90)
Sporting Lisbon 1 (Andre Cruz 23)

Saturday, April 8

Campomaiorense 2 (Hugo Cunha 51, Abilio pen 89)
Benfica 4 (Sabry 16, Joao Pinto 30, Poborsky 35, Calado 60)

Sunday, April 9

Alverca 0
Vitoria Setubal 1 (Maki 36)

Belenenses 1 (Haruna Doda 37)
Maritimo 1 (Joao Pinto 69)

Gil Vicente 2 (Sergio Lomba 60, Auri 77)
Estrela Amadora 2 (Eric Gaucho 56, 64)

FC Porto 2 (Rui Barros 26, Jardel 69)
Salgueiros 0

Sporting Braga 3 (Tailson 40, Odair 82, Luis Filipe 86)
Santa Clara 1 (Sandro 43)

Monday, April 10

Boavista 2 (Rogerio 22, Demitious 89)
Farense 1 (Ze-To 78)

Friday, April 14

Farense 1 (Ze-To 17)
Alverca 2 (Ramirez 61, Duda 90)

Saturday, April 15

Santa Clara 0
FC Porto 2 (Capucho 25, Jardel 61)

Sunday, April 16

Benfica 2 (Thomas 70, Maniche 75)
Belenenses 3 (Mendes 25, Filgueira 35, Rui Gregorio 80)

Gil Vicente 4 (Guga 5, Petit 20, Fangueiro 48, 80)
Rio Ave 0

Maritimo 0
Uniao Leiria 0

Salgueiros 2 (Feher 13, Pedro 74)
Campomaiorense 1 (Mickey 80)

Sporting Lisbon 1 (Acosta 12)
Guimaraes 0

Vitoria Setubal 0
Sporting Braga 2 (Odair 20, Tiago 90)

PORTUGAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sporting Lisbon	30	20	8	2	49	20	68
FC Porto	30	20	6	4	56	19	66
Benfica	30	18	6	6	51	30	60
Gil Vicente	30	13	9	8	44	29	48
Guimaraes	30	14	5	11	43	32	47
Boavista	29	13	6	10	32	27	45
Maritimo	30	11	11	8	33	29	44
Estrela Amadora	29	8	14	7	31	28	38
Belenenses	30	8	13	9	33	33	37
Sporting Braga	30	11	4	15	38	40	37
Alverca	30	10	7	13	36	43	37
Uniao Leiria	30	8	11	11	26	29	35
Farense	30	7	10	13	30	54	31
Rio Ave	30	7	9	14	29	45	30
Salgueiros	30	8	6	16	24	41	30
Vitoria Setubal	30	8	5	17	22	43	29
Campomaiorense	30	7	6	17	27	47	27
Santa Clara	30	5	10	15	29	44	25

LEADING GOALSCORERS

32 Mario Jardel (FC Porto)
19 Alberto Acosta (Sporting Lisbon)
18 Eric Gaucho (Estrela Amadora)
16 Nuno Gomes (Benfica)
14 Brandao (Guimaraes)
13 Toedtli (Maritimo)
12 Hugo Henrique (Rio Ave)
10 Edmilson (Guimaraes)
10 Maniche (Benfica)
10 Odair (Sporting Braga)
10 Whelliton (Boavista)

PORTUGUESE CUP – SEMI-FINALS

Apr 12: Moreirense 0 Sporting Lisbon 1; FC Porto 3 Rio Ave 0.

ROMANIA

Mar 25: Astra 1 Bacau 0; Farul 1 Arges 0; Brasov 0 Petrolul 0 1; Onesti 0 Otelul 3; Rapid 4 Extensiv 2; Rocar 1 Dinamo 2; Resita 2 Steaua 0; U Craiova 0 Ceahlaul 2.
Mar 26: National 3 Gloria 1.
Mar 31: Otelul 1 Farul 0.
Apr 1: Ceahlaul 4 Astra 0; Extensiv 1 National 2; Arges 1 Resita 1; Gloria 2 Onesti 0; Petrolul 4 Rapid 2; Rocar 1 Brasov 0.
Apr 2: Dinamo 2 Bacau 1; Steaua 1 U Craiova 0.
Apr 5: Astra 1 Steaua 0; Resita 1 Otelul 2; Farul 2 Gloria 1; Brasov 4 Dinamo 3; Bacau 2 Ceahlaul 0; National 4 Petrolul 1; Onesti 3 Extensiv 2; Rapid 1 Rocar 1; U Craiova 3 Arges 1.
Apr 8: Dinamo 1 Ceahlaul 1; Extensiv 1 Farul 3; Arges 1 Astra 1; Brasov 2 Rapid 0; Gloria 2 Resita 0; Otelul 1 U Craiova 0; Petrolul 4 Onesti 1.
Apr 9: Rocar 2 National 1; Steaua 1 Bacau 0.
Apr 12: Rocar 1 Steaua 2.
Apr 14: National 2 Brasov 0.
Apr 15: Resita 0 Extensiv 0; Farul 2 Petrolul 1; Bacau 1 Arges 0; Onesti 1 Rocar 5; Rapid 4 Dinamo 0; U Craiova 3 Gloria 1.
Apr 16: Astra 1 Otelul 1; Ceahlaul 0 Steaua 2.

ROMANIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dinamo	29	23	3	3	76	30	72
Rapid	29	18	5	6	53	33	59
Ceahlaul	29	15	5	9	45	38	50
Steaua	29	15	3	11	50	47	48
Arges	29	14	5	10	37	29	47
Gloria	29	14	2	13	42	40	44
National	29	13	4	12	51	37	43
Otelul	29	13	4	12	45	40	43
Astra	29	12	7	10	39	34	43
Bacau	29	12	6	11	31	31	42
Farul	29	11	6	12	35	41	39
Petrolul	29	11	5	13	41	45	38
Rocar	29	12	1	16	43	46	37
Brasov	29	11	3	15	42	41	36
U Craiova	29	10	6	13	33	33	36
Onesti	29	8	3	18	31	71	27
Resita	29	5	8	16	32	58	23
Extensiv	29	4	4	21	22	54	16

RUSSIA

Mar 24: Lokomotiv M 1 CSKA 0.
Mar 25: Kryliya Sovetov 1 Uralan 0; Spartak 3 Alaniya 1; Fakel 1 Rostselmash 1; Rotor 2 Zenit 0; Lokomotiv NN 0 Chernomorets 0; Dinamo 2 Saturn 0.
Apr 1: Chernomorets 4 Dinamo 0; Torpedo 2 Lokomotiv NN 1; Rostselmash 1 Rotor 1; Uralan 0 Spartak 2; Alaniya 1 Fakel 1; Lokomotiv M 2 Kryliya Sovetov 0; Zenit 1 Anzhi 0; CSKA 0 Saturn 0.
Apr 7: Dinamo 0 Torpedo 0.
Apr 8: Kryliya Sovetov 2 CSKA 0; Spartak 0 Lokomotiv M 0; Fakel 1 Uralan 1; Rotor 2 Alaniya 1; Anzhi 1 Rostselmash 0; Lokomotiv NN 1 Zenit 2; Saturn 0 Chernomorets 0.
Apr 15: Lokomotiv M 1 Fakel 0; Kryliya Sovetov 1 Spartak 2; Torpedo 2 Saturn 0; Zenit 0 Dinamo 1; Rostselmash 0 Lokomotiv NN 0; Alaniya 2 Anzhi 3; Uralan 2 Rotor 0; CSKA 0 Chernomorets 3.

RUSSIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Spartak	4	3	1	0	7	2	10
Lokomotiv M	4	3	1	0	4	0	10
Chernomorets	4	2	2	0	7	0	8
Torpedo	3	2	1	0	4	1	7
Rotor	4	2	1	1	5	4	7
Dinamo	4	2	1	1	3	4	7
Anzhi	3	2	0	1	4	3	6
Kryliya Sovetov	4	2	0	2	4	4	6
Zenit	4	2	0	2	3	4	6
Uralan	4	1	1	2	3	4	4
Fakel	4	0	3	1	3	4	3
Rostselmash	4	0	3	1	2	3	3
Lokomotiv NN	4	0	2	2	2	4	2
Saturn	4	0	2	2	0	4	2
Alaniya	4	0	1	3	5	9	1
CSKA	4	0	1	3	0	6	1

SCOTLAND

Saturday, March 25

Dundee Utd 1 (Ferraz 26)
Aberdeen 1 (Stavrum 5) Att: 6,723

Hearts 0
Motherwell 0 Att: 13,102

Kilmarnock 1 (Vareille 52)
Hibernian 0 Att: 8,068

St Johnstone 2 (Bollan 45, Millar 90)
Dundee 1 (Falconer 47) Att: 4,655

Sunday, March 26

Rangers 4 (Albertz 4, 84, Kanchelskis 41, Van Bronckhorst 87)
Celtic 0 Att: 50,031

Saturday, April 1

Aberdeen 1 (Guntveit 17)
Rangers 1 (Ferguson 37) Att: 16,251

Dundee 0
Hearts 0 Att: 6,291

Hibernian 1 (Hartley 23)
Dundee Utd 0 Att: 10,261

Motherwell 2 (Brannan pen 76, Corrigan 89)
St Johnstone 1 (Russell 46) Att: 5,900

Sunday, April 2

Celtic 4 (Johnson 10, Blinker 20, Berkovic 73, Burchill 83)
Kilmarnock 2 (Wright 49, Lauchlan 57) Att: 40,569

Tuesday, April 4

Rangers 3 (Albertz 62, Dodds 66, Wallace 73)
Dundee Utd 0 Att: 45,721

Wednesday, April 5

Celtic 4 (Johnson 9, 76, Berkovic 32, Blinker 78)
Motherwell 0 Att: 46,862

Saturday, April 8

Dundee 4 (Grady 52, 54, Billio pen 82, Luna 86)
Motherwell 1 (Goodman 15) Att: 4,701

Hearts 1 (McSwegan 36)
Celtic 0 Att: 16,046

Kilmarnock 1 (McQuillan og 80)
Dundee Utd 0 Att: 6,037

Wednesday, April 12

Hearts 1 (McSwegan 12)
Rangers 2 (Wallace 44, Dodds 64) Att: 16,314

Kilmarnock 1 (Wright 24)
Aberdeen 0 Att: 11,525

Saturday, April 15

Aberdeen 1 (Stavrum 13)
Hearts 2 (Wales 81, Jackson 84) Att: 12,626

Celtic 2 (Mahe 30, Burchill 45)
Dundee 2 (Luna 2, Gould og 54) Att: 47,163

Dundee Utd 0
Rangers 2 (B Ferguson 21, Albertz 41) Att: 11,149

Hibernian 3 (Latapy 12, Paatelainen 48, Lehmann 89)
St Johnstone 3 (Colgan og 69, McAnespie 72, Parker 88) Att: 9,211

Sunday, April 16

Motherwell 2 (Brannan 22, McCulloch 56)
Kilmarnock 0 Att: 5,429

SCOTLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rangers	30	23	6	1	83	22	75
Celtic	30	18	3	9	80	35	57
Hearts	31	13	8	10	43	36	47
Motherwell	30	11	9	10	40	56	42
Hibernian	30	9	10	11	44	50	37
St Johnstone	30	8	10	12	31	38	34
Dundee Utd	29	9	6	14	28	46	33
Dundee	30	9	5	16	39	57	32
Kilmarnock	31	6	13	12	32	41	31
Aberdeen	29	6	6	17	33	72	24

LEADING GOALSCORERS

25 Mark Viduka (Celtic)
16 Rod Wallace (Rangers)
14 Jorg Albertz (Rangers)
14 Billy Dodds (Rangers; 10 for Dundee Utd)

SCOTTISH CUP – SEMI-FINALS

Apr 8: Ayr Utd 0 Rangers 7.
Apr 9: Hibernian 1 Aberdeen 2.

SPAIN

Saturday, March 25

Alaves 0
Zaragoza 2 (Acuna 81, 85) Att: 18,000

Athletic Bilbao 1 (J Etxeberria 38)
Sevilla 1 (Juan Carlos 75) Att: 35,000

Espanyol 1 (Velamazan 59)
Racing Santander 0 Att: 18,400

Malaga 1 (Catanha 36)
Barcelona 2 (Abelardo 80, Kluivert pen 86) Att: 36,000

Numancia 3 (Delgado 11, 56, Barbu 83)
Atletico Madrid 0 Att: 9,500

Real Madrid 0
Rayo Vallecano 0 Att: 60,000

Valencia 1 (Angloma 48)
Mallorca 0 Att: 40,000

Valladolid 2 (Alberto 53, Garcia Calvo 67)
Real Sociedad 1 (Sa Pinto 6) Att: 21,000

Sunday, March 26

Betis Sevilla 0
Celta Vigo 0 Att: 30,000

La Coruna 3 (Makaay 8, 26, Donato 73)
Oviedo 1 (Danjou 69) Att: 25,000

Saturday, April 1

Real Sociedad 1 (De Paula 56)
Real Madrid 1 (Savio 3) Att: 30,000

Sunday, April 2

Atletico Madrid 1 (Hasselbaink 37)
Athletic Bilbao 2 (J Etxeberria 30, Guerrero 80) Att: 40,000

Barcelona 3 (Bogarde 64, Kluivert 69, 90)
Valencia 0 Att: 75,000

Celta Vigo 1 (McCarthy 37)
Valladolid 1 (Caminero 77) Att: 20,000

Mallorca 1 (Eto'o 23)
Espanyol 3 (Galca pen 3, Roger 72, Manel 84) Att: 22,000

Oviedo 2 (Boris 8, Ruben 33)
Malaga 2 (Catanha 27, 60) Att: 11,000

Racing Santander 0
Alaves 0 Att: 15,000

Rayo Vallecano 0
Numancia 0 Att: 9,000

Sevilla 1 (Juan Carlos 18)
La Coruna 3 (Jokanovic 11, 13, Makaay 86) Att: 35,000

Zaragoza 1 (Yordi 46)
Betis Sevilla 0 Att: 26,000

Saturday, April 8

La Coruna 4 (Turu Flores 19, Makaay 41, 43, 85)
Atletico Madrid 1 (Hasselbaink 53) Att: 30,000

Sunday, April 9

Alaves 0
Espanyol 0 Att: 16,500

Athletic Bilbao 1 (Ezquerro 50)
Rayo Vallecano 2 (Michel I 3, Llorens pen 38) Att: 36,000

Barcelona 0
Mallorca 3 (Eto'o 13, 73, Carreras 74) Att: 65,000

Betis Sevilla 2 (Alfonso pen 16, pen 84)
Racing Santander 2 (Salva pen 65, Rushfeldt 74) Att: 35,000

Malaga 3 (Catanha 65, Rufete 87, Luque 89)
Sevilla 0 Att: 28,000

Numancia 1 (Delgado 59)
Real Sociedad 2 (Idiakez 68, 78) Att: 9,000

Real Madrid 1 (Raul 67)
Celta Vigo 0 Att: 70,000

Valencia 6 (Claudio Lopez 17, 50, Danjou og 30, Angulo 57, Farinos pen 61, Oscar 82)
Oviedo 2 (Onopko 65, Pompei 85) Att: 40,000

Valladolid 1 (Victor pen 72)
Zaragoza 1 (Marcos Vales 63) Att: 12,000

Saturday, April 15

Oviedo 3 (Dely Valdes 33, 80, Pompeii 55)
Barcelona 0 Att: 15,000

Sevilla 1 (Jesuli 78)
Valencia 2 (Mendieta 70, Zalayeta og 90) Att: 20,000

Zaragoza 0
Real Madrid 1 (Raul pen 86) Att: 35,000

Sunday, April 16

Atletico Madrid 2 (Valeron 5, Solari 81)
Malaga 2 (Rufete 35, Catanha 50) Att: 40,000

Celta Vigo 0
Numancia 0 Att: 21,000

Espanyol 3 (Tamudo 52, Nando 70, Manel 90)
Betis Sevilla 0 Att: 20,000

Mallorca 2 (Lauren 19, Carlos 84)
Alaves 0 Att: 19,000

Racing Santander 1 (Salva 14)
Valladolid 1 (Alberto 82) Att: 22,000

Rayo Vallecano 2 (Michel I pen 22, Ferron 82)
La Coruna 0 Att: 11,000

Real Sociedad 4 (Aranzabal 36, Khokhlov 50, De Paula 56, 90)
Athletic Bilbao 1 (Pikabea og 35) Att: 31,000

SPAIN

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
La Coruna	33	19	4	10	59	40	61
Barcelona	33	17	5	11	63	42	56
Real Madrid	33	14	14	5	52	42	56
Zaragoza	33	14	13	6	52	33	55
Valencia	33	14	9	10	48	37	51
Alaves	33	14	9	10	35	33	51
Espanyol	33	12	10	11	51	41	46
Rayo Vallecano	33	13	7	13	44	44	46
Celta	33	13	6	14	40	39	45
Mallorca	33	12	8	13	42	41	44
Valladolid	33	11	11	11	32	39	44
Malaga	33	10	13	10	49	44	43
Real Sociedad	33	10	12	11	39	41	42
Athletic Bilbao	33	10	11	12	42	54	41
Numancia	33	10	10	13	40	52	40
Racing Santander	33	9	12	12	45	45	39
Oviedo	33	9	10	14	37	54	37
Betis Sevilla	33	9	9	15	28	48	36
Atletico Madrid	33	8	9	16	43	55	33
Sevilla	33	5	12	16	37	54	27

LEADING GOALSCORERS

23	Catanha (Malaga)
23	Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink (Atletico Madrid)
23	Salva (Racing Santander)
19	Roy Makaay (La Coruna)
19	Savo Milosevic (Zaragoza)
16	Raul (Real Madrid)
15	Diego Tristan (Mallorca)
12	Juan Carlos (Sevilla)
12	Patrick Kluivert (Barcelona)
12	Fernando Morientes (Real Madrid)
12	Rivaldo (Barcelona)
12	Victor (Valladolid)
11	Julio Cesar Dely Valdes (Oviedo)
11	Gaizka Mendieta (Valencia)

SPANISH CUP – SEMI-FINALS

1st legs
Apr 12: Atletico Madrid 3 Barcelona 0; Real Madrid 0 Espanyol 0.

SWEDEN

Apr 8: Orgryte 2 Helsingborgs 0.
Apr 9: GAIS 0 Vastra Frolunda 0; Trelleborgs 0 Halmstads 2; Orebro 1 Norrkoping 1.
Apr 10: Elfsborg 1 AIK 2; Hammarby 0 Sundsvall 1; Hacken 1 IFK Gothenburg 3.
Apr 16: Sundsvall 2 Orebro 2; Vastra Frolunda 0 Trelleborgs 1.
Apr 17: AIK 1 Hacken 1; IFK Gothenburg 2 Orgryte 0; Helsingborgs 0 Hammarby 0.

SWEDEN

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
IFK Gothenburg	2	2	0	0	5	1	6
AIK	2	1	1	0	3	2	4
Sundsvall	2	1	1	0	3	2	4
Halmstads	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
Orgryte	2	1	0	1	2	2	3
Trelleborgs	2	1	0	1	1	2	3
Orebro	2	0	2	0	3	3	2
Norrkoping	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
GAIS	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Vastra Frolunda	2	0	1	1	0	1	1
Hammarby	2	0	1	1	0	1	1
Hacken	2	0	1	1	2	4	1
Helsingborgs	2	0	1	1	0	2	1
Elfsborg	1	0	0	1	1	2	0

SWITZERLAND

CHAMPIONSHIP PLAY-OFFS

Mar 25: Lausanne 2 Neuchatel Xamax 1; Servette 1 St Gallen 2.
Mar 26: Grasshopper 4 Yverdon 1; Lucerne 3 Basle 2.
Apr 1: Basle 1 Servette 0; Neuchatel Xamax 1 Grasshopper 3.
Apr 2: St Gallen 7 Lucerne 1; Yverdon 1 Lausanne 0.
Apr 7: St Gallen 1 Basle 1.
Apr 9: Grasshopper 1 Lausanne 1; Yverdon 3 Neuchatel Xamax 0; Servette 6 Lucerne 0.
Apr 15: Basle 2 Yverdon 0; Neuchatel Xamax 0 St Gallen 3; Lausanne 2 Servette 1.
Apr 16: Lucerne 0 Grasshopper 1.

SWITZERLAND – PLAY-OFFS

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
St Gallen	6	4	2	0	18	7	37 [23]
Grasshopper	6	3	3	0	15	9	29 [17]
Basle	6	2	3	1	8	6	28 [19]
Lausanne	6	2	2	2	5	5	26 [18]
Servette	6	2	1	3	12	7	21 [14]
Yverdon	6	2	0	4	7	11	21 [15]
Lucerne	6	2	0	4	8	20	20 [14]
Neuchatel Xamax	6	1	1	4	6	14	18 [14]

Teams carried forward half the points won during the first stage (figure in brackets)

TURKEY

Mar 24: Gaziantepspor 0 Denizlispor 0.
Mar 25: Istanbulspor 0 Vanspor 0; Trabzonspor 1 Besiktas 2; Adanaspor 2 Erzurum 0; Bursaspor 2 Samsunspor 2.
Mar 26: Galatasaray 0 Fenerbahce 1; Kocaelispor 2 Altay 1; Ankaragucu 0 Genclerbirligi 0; Antalyaspor 1 Goztepe 0.
Mar 31: Denizlispor 0 Trabzonspor 2.
Apr 1: Erzurum 0 Galatasaray 0; Vanspor 1 Gaziantepspor 2; Goztepe 0 Bursaspor 1; Genclerbirligi 5 Adanaspor 2; Fenerbahce 1 Antalyaspor 0.
Apr 2: Besiktas 3 Ankaragucu 1; Kocaelispor 2 Istanbulspor 1; Samsunspor 1 Altay 0.
Apr 7: Bursaspor 2 Fenerbahce 1.
Apr 8: Kocaelispor 1 Gaziantepspor 2; Goztepe 1 Samsunspor 2; Istanbulspor 1 Altay 0; Adanaspor 1 Besiktas 3.
Apr 9: Trabzonspor 4 Vanspor 2; Galatasaray 6 Genclerbirligi 0; Antalyaspor 1 Erzurum 2; Ankaragucu 3 Denizlispor 1.
Apr 14: Besiktas 1 Galatasaray 1.
Apr 15: Kocaelispor 1 Trabzonspor 0; Altay 1 Gaziantepspor 3; Genclerbirligi 4 Antalyaspor 1; Denizlispor 4 Adanaspor 2.
Apr 16: Erzurum 4 Bursaspor 1; Vanspor 2 Ankaragucu 3; Samsunspor 1 Istanbulspor 0; Fenerbahce 2 Goztepe 3.

TURKEY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Galatasaray	29	22	5	2	66	18	71
Besiktas	29	20	5	4	58	18	65
Gaziantepspor	29	14	10	5	41	22	52
Samsunspor	29	15	4	10	46	34	49
Fenerbahce	29	13	10	6	47	38	49
Trabzonspor	29	13	7	9	40	29	46
Genclerbirligi	29	11	8	10	41	43	41
Denizlispor	29•	11	7	11	45	49	40
Bursaspor	29	10	6	13	41	49	36
Ankaragucu	29	9	8	12	39	47	35
Adanaspor	29	10	5	14	43	52	35
Kocaelispor	29	10	5	14	39	49	35
Erzurum	29	9	8	12	33	44	35
Altay	29	9	6	14	31	37	33
Antalyaspor	29	9	6	14	32	49	33
Istanbulspor	29	6	11	12	27	36	29
Goztepe	29	6	5	18	21	42	23
Vanspor	29	3	6	20	32	66	15

UKRAINE

Mar 25: Tavriya 2 Kryvbas 4; Zirka 0 Vorskla 2; Metalurh D 2 Metalurh Z 1; Chornomorets 0 Shakhtar 3; Karpaty 0 Prykarpattya 1; Metalist 2 Metalurh M 0; CSKA 0 Nyva 0.
Mar 26: Dnipro 0 Dynamo 2.
Apr 2: Dynamo 4 Nyva 1; Metalurh M 2 CSKA 0; Prykarpattya 2 Metalist 0; Shakhtar 4 Karpaty 0; Metalurh Z 3 Chornomorets 0; Vorskla 0 Metalurh D 0; Kryvbas 3 Zirka 1.
Apr 3: Dnipro 1 Tavriya 0.
Apr 8: Tavriya 1 Dynamo 3; Zirka 1 Dnipro 1; Metalurh D 0 Kryvbas 0; Chornomorets 1 Vorskla 1; Karpaty 1 Metalurh Z 0; Metalist 0 Shakhtar 1; CSKA 2 Prykarpattya 1; Nyva 2 Metalurh M 1.
Apr 16: Dynamo 6 Metalurh M 1; Prykarpattya 2 Nyva 1; Shakhtar 3 CSKA 0; Metalurh Z 1 Metalist 1; Vorskla 1 Karpaty 0; Kryvbas 2 Chornomorets 0; Dnipro 0 Metalurh D 1; Tavriya 2 Zirka 0.

UKRAINE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dynamo	20	18	2	0	55	10	56
Kryvbas	20	12	6	2	37	19	42
Shakhtar	20	13	2	5	33	9	41
Vorskla	20	11	5	4	39	19	38
Metalurh Z	20	8	6	6	26	20	30
Metalurh D	20	7	7	6	23	21	28
Metalist	20	8	4	8	26	25	28
Karpaty	20	9	0	11	28	28	27
Metalurh M	20	8	1	11	31	34	25
Prykarpattya	20	6	6	8	18	27	24
CSKA	20	5	7	8	20	25	22
Dnipro	20	5	6	9	17	35	21
Tavriya	20	5	4	11	24	36	19
Nyva	20	4	6	10	26	40	18
Chornomorets	20	4	4	12	9	36	16
Zirka	20	0	8	12	10	38	8

YUGOSLAVIA

Mar 25: Vojvodina 1 Obilic 1; Proleter 1 Mogren 2; Hajduk B 3 Sartid 0; Cukaricki 1 Milicionar 1; Partizan 8 Borac 1; Sutjeska 0 Red Star 1; Radnicki N 2 Zeleznik 0; Spartak 2 Zemun 1; Radnicki K 0 Buducnost 0; OFK 0 Rad 0.
Apr 1: Rad 1 Radnicki K 1; Buducnost 4 Spartak 0; Zemun 1 Radnicki N 0; Zeleznik 3 Sutjeska 1; Milicionar 2 Hajduk B 0; Sartid 2 Proleter 0; Obilic 1 Hajduk K 0; Borac 1 Cukaricki 2; Mogren 0 Vojvodina 0.
Apr 2: Red Star 2 Partizan 1.
Apr 5: Cukaricki 1 Buducnost 1.
Apr 8: Hajduk K 1 Mogren 0; Vojvodina 0 Sartid 1; Proleter 3 Milicionar 0; Hajduk B 3 Borac 0; Cukaricki 0 Red Star 1; Partizan 1 Zeleznik 1; Sutjeska 0 Zemun 0; Radnicki N 1 Buducnost 0; Spartak 2 Rad 3; Radnicki K 0 OFK 0.
Apr 15: OFK 3 Spartak 0; Rad 2 Radnicki N 1; Buducnost 0 Sutjeska 0; Zemun 0 Partizan 3; Zeleznik 1 Cukaricki 2; Red Star 3 Hajduk B 0; Borac 0 Proleter 1; Milicionar 0 Vojvodina 0; Sartid 4 Hajduk K 0; Mogren 4 Obilic 0.

YUGOSLAVIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Red Star	33	26	6	1	69	17	84
Partizan	33	26	4	3	91	23	82
Obilic	33	24	5	4	58	26	77
Rad	33	15	8	10	50	37	53
Sutjeska	34	13	9	12	41	43	48
OFK	33	12	10	11	49	47	46
Radnicki N	34	14	4	16	40	41	46
Buducnost	33	13	6	14	39	34	45
Zeleznik	33	12	9	12	43	39	45
Cukaricki	33	12	9	12	32	35	45
Milicionar	34	12	8	14	44	45	44
Zemun	33	11	9	13	38	46	42
Vojvodina	33	11	8	14	44	43	41
Radnicki K	33	10	11	12	26	34	41
Sartid	34	11	7	16	33	40	40
Proleter	33	10	9	14	31	39	39
Mogren	34	11	5	18	34	59	38
Hajduk K	33	10	7	16	26	38	37
Hajduk B	33	11	3	19	45	63	36
Spartak	34	7	5	22	26	66	26
Borac	34	6	4	24	35	79	22

SOUTH AMERICA

LIBERTADORES CUP

Group 1

Mar 15
Nacional (Uru) 1 (Scotti 57)
Atletico Paranaense (Bra) 3 (Kelly 14, 18, Lucas 62)

Mar 22
Atletico Paranaense 2 (Luisinho 2, Lucas 74)
Alianza Lima (Per) 1 (Hinostroza 31)

Nacional 1 (Alvez 68)
Emelec (Ecu) 0

Apr 4
Emelec 0
Atletico Paranaense 0

Apr 5
Alianza Lima 2 (Salazar 51, Quinteros 61)
Nacional 2 (Varela 24, Scotti 67)

Apr 12
Atletico Paranaense 2 (Luiz Carlos Goiano 43, Luisinho Netto 47)
Nacional 0

Emelec 2 (Candelario 54, Tenorio 67)
Alianza Lima 2 (Gil 22, Arakaki 42)

GROUP 1 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
At Paranaense*	6	5	1	0	11	2	16
Nacional*	6	3	1	2	8	7	10
Alianza Lima	6	1	2	3	7	12	5
Emelec	6	0	2	4	3	8	2

Group 2

Mar 16
Penarol (Uru) 0
Boca Juniors (Arg) 0

Mar 22
Boca Juniors 6 (Moreno 3, 46, 57, 63, 65, Traverso 9)
Blooming (Bol) 1 (L Gutierrez 73)

Apr 5
Penarol 5 (Franco 3, 11, 33, Garcia 54, Pacheco 88)
Universidad Catolica (Chl) 1 (Nunez 68)

Apr 12
Universidad Catolica 1 (Nunez 20)
Boca Juniors 3 (Barijho 34, 84, Tapia og 70)

Apr 13
Blooming 3 (Antelo pen 35, Gutierrez 73, 87)
Penarol 3 (Franco 8, Garcia 15, Bengoechea pen 19)

GROUP 2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Boca Juniors	5	3	1	1	11	4	10
Penarol	5	2	3	0	11	6	9
Blooming	5	2	1	2	9	12	7
U Catolica	5	0	1	4	5	14	1

Group 3

Mar 14
America (Mex) 1 (Calderon 17)
LDU (Ecu) 0

Olimpia (Par) 2 (Esteche pen 18, Paredes 59)
Corinthians (Bra) 2 (Kleber 12, Marcelinho Carioca 54)

Apr 5
Corinthians 2 (Vampeta 76, Dinei 81)
America 1 (Blanco 14)

Olimpia 1 (Paredes 79)
LDU 1 (Capurro 66)

Apr 11
LDU 0
Corinthians 2 (Luizao 18, Dinei 88)

Apr 12
America 8 (Hermosillo 1, 42, Blanco 14, 64, 85, Pardo 61, Calderon 71, Salgado 75)
Olimpia 2 (Monzon 10, Quintana 43)

GROUP 3

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Corinthians	5	3	1	1	12	5	10
America	5	3	0	2	13	7	9
Olimpia	5	2	2	1	9	12	8
LDU	5	0	1	4	1	11	1

Group 4

Mar 15
River Plate (Arg) 3 (Angel 25, 37, 39)
Atlas (Mex) 2 (Rodriguez pen 28, Osorno 29)

Mar 16
Atletico Nacional (Col) 4 (Galarcio 17, Aristizabal 28, Munoz 45, Calle pen 90)
Universidad de Chile 1 (P Gonzalez 74)

Mar 22
Atlas 5 (Osorno 5, Rodriguez pen 13, pen 87, Santillana 29, Castillo 37)
Atletico Nacional 1 (Martinez 67)

Apr 6
Universidad de Chile 1 (Gonzalez pen 35)
River Plate 1 (Olarra og 24)

GROUP 4

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
River Plate*	5	2	3	0	9	6	9
Atlas	5	2	2	1	11	7	8
U de Chile	5	1	2	2	7	8	5
Atletico Nacional	5	1	1	3	8	14	4

Group 5

Mar 15
Atletico Junior (Col) 2 (Restrepo 12, Ballesteros 56)
Cerro Porteno (Par) 0

Mar 16
Universitario (Per) 1 (Esidio 32)
San Lorenzo (Arg) 1 (Ameli 19)

Mar 21
Cerro Porteno 3 (V Ferreira 53, Baez 72, Campos 76)
Universitario 0

San Lorenzo 2 (Pusineri 27, Lopez pen 60)
Atletico Junior 0

Apr 6
Cerro Porteno 3 (Michelini og 31, CA Espinola 39, Cohener 81)
San Lorenzo 1 (Grisales 49)

Universitario 0
Atletico Junior 1 (Palacios 34)

GROUP 5 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Atletico Junior*	6	4	0	2	7	4	12
Cerro Porteno*	6	3	1	2	9	6	10
San Lorenzo	6	2	2	2	10	9	8
Universitario	6	1	1	4	2	9	4

Group 6

Mar 14
America (Col) 3 (Maturana 8, Castillo 73, Moreno 78)
Sporting Cristal (Per) 1 (Holsen 43)

Rosario Central (Arg) 4 (Maceratesi 16, 26, 41, Gonzalez 64)
Colegiales (Par) 2 (Martinez 76, Denis 79)

Mar 22
America 2 (Gonzalez 10, Maturana 74)
Colegiales 1 (Saucedo 41)

Mar 23
Sporting Cristal 3 (Juarez 4, 36, Holsen 32)
Rosario Central 3 (Pizzi 15, Gonzalez 62, Maceratesi 81)

Apr 4
Colegiales 2 (Velazquez 43, VH Ortiz 63)
Sporting Cristal 1 (Holsen 89)

Rosario Central 3 (Gordillo 36, Maceratesi 56, Pizzi pen 90)
America 3 (Vargas 46, Maturana 50, 71)

GROUP 6

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
America*	5	4	1	0	18	10	13
Rosario Central*	5	2	2	1	16	14	8
Sporting Cristal	5	1	1	3	9	11	4
Colegiales	5	1	0	4	7	15	3

Group 7

Mar 16
El Nacional (Ecu) 3 (J Burbano 3, Chala 26, 66)
Palmeiras (Bra) 1 (Alex 88)

Mar 21
El Nacional 0
The Strongest (Bol) 0

Palmeiras 3 (Rogerio 3, Asprilla 54, Junior 66)
Juventude (Bra) 0

Apr 6
El Nacional 2 (Fernandez 1, Chala 10)
Juventude 0

The Strongest 4 (Gonzalez 19, Coelho 21, Delfino 51, Indio og 74)
Palmeiras 2 (Arce 48, Junior 77)

Apr 12
Juventude 4 (Wallace 5, 56, Luiz Oscar 26, Kiko 79)
The Strongest 0

Apr 13
Palmeiras 4 (Pena 17, 20, Argel 42, Alex 57)
El Nacional 1 (Herrera pen 26)

GROUP 7

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Palmeiras	5	3	0	2	14	8	9
El Nacional	5	2	1	2	6	6	7
The Strongest	5	2	1	2	9	11	7
Juventude	5	2	0	3	6	10	6

Group 8

Mar 14
Atletico Mineiro (Bra) 2 (Guilherme 56, 79)
Bella Vista Montevideo (Uru) 1 (Lemos 86)

Cobreloa (Chl) 3 (Donoso 10, Cornejo 23, Bennet 41)
Bolivar (Bol) 3 (Sanchez 73, Baldivieso pen 86, Ferreira 87)

Mar 22
Bolivar 4 (Pizarro 8, Gatty Ribeiro 28, Gotardi 57, Baldivieso 72)
Atletico Mineiro 0

Cobreloa 1 (Cornejo 36)
Bella Vista Montevideo 1 (Lemos 7)

Apr 4
Bella Vista Montevideo 4 (Emanuelle 21, 22, 50, Fleita 75)
Bolivar 0

Apr 5
Atletico Mineiro 6 (Guilherme 4, 56, 74, 75, Ramon 7, Cairo 90)
Cobreloa 0

GROUP 8

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Atletico Mineiro	5	3	0	2	9	6	9
Bolivar	5	2	1	2	8	8	7
Cobreloa	5	1	3	1	6	11	6
Bella Vista M	5	1	2	2	7	5	5

Top two from each group qualify for second round
**Qualified*

ARGENTINA

CLOSING CHAMPIONSHIP

Friday, March 31

San Lorenzo 4 (Lopez 45, pen 60, Romeo 63, Pusineri 79)
Ferro Carril Oeste 0

Saturday, April 1

Rosario Central 1 (Maceratesi 61)
Racing Club 1 (Cordone 76)

Sunday, April 2

Argentinos Juniors 1 (Cervera 75)
Gimnasia J 0

Belgrano Cordoba 3 (Lujambio 9, Torres 52, 90)
Union Santa Fe 1 (Paz 29)

Boca Juniors 0
Velez Sarsfield 0

Colon Santa Fe 0
Talleres Cordoba 1 (Marzo 30)

Estudiantes 1 (Romagnoli pen 12)
Gimnasia LP 2 (Sava 18, Alonso 28)

Independiente 1 (Marioni pen 12)
Newell's Old Boys 2 (Quintana 58, Manso 79)

Lanus 1 (Zubeldia 4)
River Plate 1 (Angel 13)

Monday, April 3

Instituto Cordoba 1 (Jimenez pen 50)
Chacarita Juniors 3 (Pages 8, Abalos 36, Boujon 55)

Friday, April 7

Racing Club 1 (Milito 61)
Colon Santa Fe 3 (Fuertes pen 52, Delgado 75, Biaggio 77)

Saturday, April 8

Gimnasia J 1 (M Lobo 88)
Velez Sarsfield 3 (D Husain 50, 57, Bassedas 90)

Gimnasia LP 1 (Alonso 51)
Belgrano Cordoba 3 (Lujambio 7, 10, 15)

Talleres Cordoba 1 (Pronetto 67)
Estudiantes 1 (Farias 46)

Union Santa Fe 3 (Domizi 17, Tilger 39, Basualdo 83)
Independiente 1 (Forlan 57)

Sunday, April 9

Ferro Carril Oeste 1 (Rodriguez 71)
Instituto Cordoba 1 (Jimenez 21)

Newell's Old Boys 3 (S Cejas pen 9, Real 36, Bernardi 88)
Lanus 2 (Klimowicz 15, J Fernandez 86)

San Lorenzo 0
Boca Juniors 1 (Riquelme 22)

Tuesday, April 11

Argentinos Juniors 1 (Denis 50)
Newell's Old Boys 4 (Fuentes 9, Crosa 17, Paris 22, Gigena 90)

Independiente 2 (Forlan 11, Galvan 66)
Gimnasia LP 0

Instituto Cordoba 1 (Amato 54)
San Lorenzo 0

Wednesday, April 12

Belgrano Cordoba 0
Talleres Cordoba 0

Colon Santa Fe 1 (Enria 90)
Chacarita Juniors 0

Estudiantes 2 (Agoglia 66, Casartelli 70)
Racing Club 2 (Peralta 13, Lux 79)

Lanus 5 (Klimowicz 25, Betancourt 33, Vilallonga pen 63, pen 67, 83)
Union Santa Fe 2 (Domizi 18, Zapata 81)

Rosario Central 4 (Pizzi pen 9, 58, 82, Groothuis og 22)
Ferro Carril Oeste 2 (Hernandez 29, Rocha pen 64)

Velez Sarsfield 2 (Trotta og 43, Obolo 86)
River Plate 3 (Cardetti 44, Trotta pen 68, Saviola 76)

Friday, April 14

Racing Club 0
Belgrano Cordoba 0

Saturday, April 15

Talleres Cordoba 0
Independiente 4 (Marioni 9, 55, Cambiasso 72, Forlan 88)

Sunday, April 16

Chacarita Juniors 3 (Schiavi 6, Carrario 56, Carreno 90)
Estudiantes 1 (Farias 42)

Gimnasia LP 2 (San Esteban pen 4, Sava 85)
Lanus 1 (M Fernandez 56)

Instituto Cordoba 2 (Marczuk 10, Amato 37)
Boca Juniors 2 (Delgado 13, 62)

Newell's Old Boys 1 (Bernardi 31)
Velez Sarsfield 1 (Castroman 3)

San Lorenzo 1 (Erviti 61)
Rosario Central 0

Union Santa Fe 2 (Cabrol 10, Silvera 78)
Argentinos Juniors 1 (Zagharian 44)

Monday, April 17

Ferro Carril Oeste 0
Colon Santa Fe 2 (Fuertes 61, 64)

River Plate 2 (Coudet 47, Gancedo 49)
Gimnasia J 0

ARGENTINA – CLOSING

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
River Plate	9	6	3	0	18	8	21
Colon Santa Fe	10	6	2	2	23	15	20
San Lorenzo	10	6	2	2	11	4	20
Boca Juniors	9	5	4	0	17	5	19
Newell's Old Boys	10	5	3	2	21	12	18
Gimnasia LP	10	5	2	3	19	19	17
Independiente	10	5	1	4	23	14	16
Belgrano Cordoba	10	4	3	3	14	11	15
Talleres Cordoba	10	4	2	4	11	13	14
Union Santa Fe	10	4	2	4	14	19	14
Velez Sarsfield	9	3	4	2	15	11	13
Rosario Central	9	3	4	2	14	11	13
Instituto Cordoba	10	3	3	4	11	15	12
Lanus*	9	3	3	3	17	14	9
Racing Club	10	1	5	4	10	14	8
Chacarita Juniors	9	2	2	5	8	12	8
Estudiantes	10	1	4	5	15	20	7
Ferro Carril Oeste	10	2	1	7	8	23	7
Argentinos Juniors	9	1	2	6	8	22	5
Gimnasia J	9	0	2	7	6	21	2

*3 pts deducted

BOLIVIA

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

Mar 19: Atletico Pompeya 2 Oriente 2; Union Central 1 Real Potosi 0; Bolivar 3 Mariscal Braun 0; Guabira 4 Santa Cruz 3.
Mar 23: Jorge Wilstermann 1 Independiente 0.
Apr 2: Mariscal Braun 5 Atletico Pompeya 1; The Strongest 3 Union Central 1; Blooming 0 Oriente 0; Bolivar 4 Santz Cruz 3; Real Potosi 1 Oriente 0; Guabira 4 Jorge Wilstermann 3.
Apr 9: Guabira 3 Atletico Pompeya 0; Blooming 3 Santa Cruz 0; Mariscal Braun 2 Union Central 1; Oriente 1 Independiente 1.

BOLIVIA – OPENING: GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Blooming	8	6	1	1	14	7	19
The Strongest	7	5	2	0	21	4	17
Real Potosi	8	5	0	3	16	12	15
Guabira	9	4	1	4	19	22	13
Mariscal Braun	9	3	1	5	16	22	10
Atletico Pompeya	9	2	2	5	11	25	8

BOLIVIA – OPENING: GROUP B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Independiente	9	4	2	3	18	12	14
J Wilstermann	8	4	1	3	14	10	13
Bolivar	8	4	1	3	16	16	13
Oriente	9	2	6	1	15	11	12
Union Central	9	1	2	6	10	17	5
Santa Cruz	9	1	1	7	11	23	4

BRAZIL

RIO (CARIOCA) STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

First stage

Mar 19: Vasco da Gama 3 Bangu 0; Fluminense 2 Botafogo 0; Madureira 0 Flamengo 4; Volta Redonda 2 Americano 2; Olaria 3 Friburguense 1.
Mar 23: Flamengo 1 Volta Redonda 0; Friburguense 0 Vasco da Gama 1; Bangu 2 Cabofriense 0; Americano 1 Madureira 1; Fluminense 1 America 0; Botafogo 2 Olaria 1.
Mar 26: Vasco da Gama 6 Americano 0; Botafogo 2 Flamengo 1; Madureira 1 Cabofriense 1; Volta Redonda 2 Fluminense 1; Friburguense 1 America 1; Olaria 3 Bangu 2.
Mar 29: Bangu 3 America 0; Cabofriense 1 Volta Redonda 1; Botafogo 5 Friburguense 1; Americano 3 Flamengo 2; Olaria 1 Vasco da Gama 4.
Apr 2: Vasco da Gama 3 Fluminense 2; Americano 3 Cabofriense 1; Flamengo 2 Olaria 0; Botafogo 2 Madureira 1; America 1 Volta Redonda 0; Bangu 0 Friburguense 0.
Apr 9: Fluminense 2 Americano 3; Vasco da Gama 0 Botafogo 0; America 3 Olario 0; Cabofriense 0 Flamengo 0; Friburguense 1 Madureira 1; Bangu 1 Volta Redonda 0.

RIO STATE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Vasco da Gama	7	6	1	0	19	3	19
Botafogo	7	5	1	1	14	6	16
Flamengo	7	4	2	1	15	4	14
Americano	7	3	3	1	14	14	12
Fluminense	7	3	1	3	11	9	10
Bangu	7	3	1	3	8	9	10
America	7	2	2	3	6	11	8
Volta Redonda	7	1	3	3	5	7	6
Olaria	7	2	0	5	8	17	6
Cabofriense	7	0	5	2	4	8	5
Friburguense	7	0	4	3	5	12	4
Madureira	7	0	3	4	5	14	3

SAO PAULO STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

Second stage

Mar 19: Uniao Sao Joao 2 Sao Paulo 2; Botafogo 3 Barbarense 0; Palmeiras 2 Portuguguesa Sant 1; Rio Branco 0 Guarani 1; Matonense 1 Inter Limeira 1; Aracatuba 0 Mogi Mirim 1; Corinthians 5 Santos 1; Ponte Preta 1 Portuguesa 1.
Mar 23: Portuguesa 2 Corinthians 5; Sao Paulo 5 Rio Branco 1; Santos 7 Aracatuba 2; Guarani 2 Botafogo 1; Inter Limeira 2 Ponte Preta 1; Mogi Mirim 1 Matonense 0; Portuguesa Sant 1 Uniao Sao Joao 1; Barbarense 1 Palmeiras 1.
Mar 26: Aracatuba 0 Corinthians 3; Inter Limeira 1 Santos 2; Sao Paulo 1 Barbarense 0; Portuguesa Sant 0 Guarani 1; Ponte Preta 1 Matonense 1; Botafogo 2 Rio Branco 1; Portuguesa 2 Mogi Mirim 1.
Mar 29: Uniao Sao Joao 1 Palmeiras 4.
Apr 2: Sao Paulo 3 Guarani 2; Portuguesa Sant 2 Barbarense 1; Corinthians 4 Ponte Preta 2; Matonense 3 Aracatuba 0; Palmeiras 2 Botafogo 1; Uniao Sao Joao 3 Rio Branco 2; Santos 1 Portuguesa 1; Inter Limeira 2 Mogi Mirim 1.
Apr 9: Matonense 2 Corinthians 0; Sao Paulo 4 Portuguesa Sant 2; Rio Branco 5 Palmeiras 2; Mogi Mirim 1 Santos 0; Barbarense 2 Guarani 0; Ponte Preta 2 Aracatuba 1; Botafogo 0 Uniao Sao Joao 0; Portuguesa 1 Inter Limeira 0.

GROUP 3

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sao Paulo	7	6	1	0	19	8	19
Guarani	7	3	2	2	9	9	11
Portuguesa Sant	7	2	1	4	9	11	7
Barbarense	7	1	3	3	8	12	6

GROUP 4

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Corinthians	7	6	0	1	24	9	18
Matonense	7	2	4	1	11	7	10
Ponte Preta	7	2	2	3	8	10	8
Aracatuba	7	0	1	6	4	20	1

GROUP 5

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Palmeiras	7	3	2	2	13	12	11
Uniao Sao Joao	7	2	4	1	10	10	10
Botafogo	7	2	1	4	7	9	7
Rio Branco	7	2	0	5	13	17	6

GROUP 6

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Santos	7	3	2	2	14	12	11
Inter Limeira	7	3	1	3	10	9	10
Mogi Mirim	7	3	0	4	7	10	9
Portuguesa	7	2	4	1	9	10	10

Top two from each group qualify for quarter-finals. Groups numbered from 3 to 6 because First Stage groups were numbered 1 and 2.

CHILE

PRE-SEASON CUP

Mar 19: Cobreloa 2 Coquimbo Unido 0; Palestino 2 Everton 1; Santiago Morning 1 Santiago Wanderers 0; U Catolica 1 Audax Italiano 1; Colo Colo 2 Puerto Montt 1; Huachipato 5 Provincial Osorno 3; Union Espanola 6 Dep Concepcion 1.
Mar 26: Cobreloa 2 Everton 0; Coquimbo Unido 1 Palestino 0; Santiago Morning 3 U Catolica 0; U de Chile 6 O'Higgins 0.
Apr 2: Coquimbo Unido 0 Everton 1; Cobreloa 3 Palestino 0; Santiago Wanderers 0 U Catolica 0; Santiago Morning 2 Audax Italiano 0; Huachipato 5 Puerto Montt 0; Provincial Osorno 1 Colo Colo 3; U de Chile 3 Union Espanola 1.

GROUP 1 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
U de Chile	6	4	2	0	15	3	14
Union Espanola	6	3	2	1	19	12	11
Dep Concepcion	6	1	3	2	4	10	6
O'Higgins	6	0	1	5	4	17	1

GROUP 2 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Santiago Morning	6	4	1	1	9	4	13
U Catolica	6	3	2	1	7	6	11
Audax Italiano	6	2	2	2	11	8	8
Santiago Wanderers	6	0	1	5	0	9	1

GROUP 3 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Colo Colo	6	4	1	1	16	5	13
Huachipato	6	2	2	2	12	8	8
Provincial Osorno	6	2	0	4	12	14	6
Puerto Montt	6	1	1	4	6	19	4

GROUP 4 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cobreloa	6	4	1	1	11	4	13
Everton	6	3	0	3	6	7	9
Palestino	6	2	1	3	5	8	7
Coquimbo Unido	6	2	0	4	3	6	6

Group winners qualify for semi-finals

COLOMBIA

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

Mar 19: Bucaramanga 1 At Nacional 0; At Huila 2 Cortulua 1; America 2 At Junior 0; Millonarios 2 Once Caldas 1; Indep Medellin 2 Dep Pasto 1; Real Cartagena 0 Dep Cali 1; Quindio 1 Tolima 4; Envigado 0 Indep Santa Fe 1.
Mar 26: At Junior 3 Bucaramanga 0; At Nacional 3 Millonarios 0; Once Caldas 2 At Huila 1; Cortulua 1 America 0; Tolima 2 Envigado 2; Indep Santa Fe 0 Indep Medellin 1; Dep Pasto 2 Real Cartagena 1; Dep Cali 0 Quindio 0.
Apr 2: America 4 Cortulua 0; Envigado 1 Tolima 0; Quindio 1 Dep Cali 3; At Nacional 2 Indep Sante Fe 2; Millonarios 0 Indep Medellin 0; Dep Pasto 1 At Junior 0; Real Cartagena 1 Bucaramanga 0; At Huila 2 Once Caldas 0.
Apr 9: Tolima 2 America 0; Indep Medellin 0 Quindio 2; Cortulua 3 At Nacional 0; Real Cartagena 1 Millonarios 1; Dep Cali 0 At Huila 0; Once Caldas 0 Envigado 1; Indep Santa Fe 1 Dep Pasto 1; Bucaramanga 1 At Junior 0.

COLOMBIA – OPENING: GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
America	9	4	1	4	15	8	13
Cortulua	9	4	1	4	12	14	13
At Nacional	9	3	3	3	12	13	12
Millonarios	9	3	3	3	11	12	12
Bucaramanga	9	3	3	3	8	9	12
At Junior	9	3	2	4	14	10	11
At Huila	9	2	4	3	7	9	10
Once Caldas	9	3	1	5	11	20	10

COLOMBIA – OPENING: GROUP B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Tolima	8	6	1	1	17	7	19
Dep Cali	8	5	3	0	12	2	18
Indep Medellin	9	4	2	3	9	10	14
Envigado	9	3	4	2	10	8	13
Real Cartagena	9	3	1	5	8	10	10
Dep Pasto	9	3	1	5	8	14	10
Indep Santa Fe	9	2	3	4	8	13	9
Quindio	9	2	3	4	8	13	9

ECUADOR

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

Mar 19: Barcelona 0 Espoli 1; Aucas 1 Tecnico Univ 0; El Nacional 2 Emelec 0; LDU 1 Olmedo 1; Macara 1 Dep Quito 0.
Apr 2: Emelec 3 Olmedo 1; Dep Quito 1 Aucas 1; Tecnico Univ 4 LDU 4; Espoli 2 Macara 1; El Nacional 7 Barcelona 0.
Apr 9: LDU 2 Dep Quito 1; Macara 0 El Nacional 0; Aucas 0 Espoli 0; Olmedo 1 Tecnico Univ 0; Barcelona 0 Emelec 0.

ECUADOR – OPENING

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Espoli	8	5	2	1	11	7	17
Emelec	8	4	2	2	11	6	14
Aucas	8	4	2	2	6	6	14
LDU	8	3	4	1	14	11	13
Olmedo	8	3	3	2	8	7	12
El Nacional	8	2	5	1	15	9	11
Macara	8	1	4	3	7	9	7
Barcelona	8	1	3	4	4	12	6
Dep Quito	8	0	5	3	7	10	5
Tecnico Univ	8	0	4	4	10	16	4

PARAGUAY

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

Mar 19: Colegiales 0 Olimpia 2; Cerro Porteno 1 Sol de America 2; San Lorenzo 0 12 de Octubre 0; Sportivo Luqueno 2 Universal 1; Guarani 3 Cerro Cora 0.
Apr 2: Universal 0 Cerro Porteno 2; Cerro Cora 0 Sportivo Luqueno 1; Olimpia 0 Guarani 0; 12 de Octubre 2 Colegiales 1; San Lorenzo 0 Sol de America 1.
Apr 9: San Lorenzo 1 Universal 1; Cerro Porteno 1 Cerro Cora 1; Olimpia 4 Sportivo Luqueno 2; Sol de America 1 12 de Octubre 1; Guarani 2 Colegiales 1.

PARAGUAY – OPENING

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Olimpia	6	4	2	0	11	4	14
Guarani	6	3	2	1	12	6	11
Sol de America	6	3	2	1	10	9	11
Cerro Porteno	6	2	3	1	7	5	9
San Lorenzo	6	2	3	1	5	3	9
12 de Octubre	6	2	2	2	6	6	8
Sportivo Luqueno	6	2	1	3	6	10	7
Colegiales	6	2	0	4	9	11	6
Cerro Cora	6	1	1	4	5	10	4
Universal	6	0	2	4	7	14	2

PERU

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

Mar 19: Alianza Lima 1 Melgar 1; Sporting Cristal 3 Union Minas 0; Universitario 0 Dep Pesquero 0; Alianza Atletico 2 Sport Boys 1; Dep UPAO 4 Dep Municipal 2; Juan Aurich 2 Cienciano 2.
Mar 26: Sport Boys 1 Juan Aurich 0; Dep Municipal 1 Universitario 5; Union Minas 2 Dep UPAO 1; Sporting Cristal 0 Alianza Lima 1; Cienciano 1 Melgar 2; Dep Pesquero 1 Alianza Atletico 2.
Apr 2: Cienciano 2 Sporting Cristal 2; Alianza Atletico 4 Dep Municipal 2; Dep UPAO 1 Alinaza Lima 1; Melgar 4 Sport Boys 0; Juan Aurich 1 Dep Pesquero 1; Universitario 1 Union Minas 0.
Apr 9: Melgar 2 Alianza Atletico 0; Alianza Lima 2 Dep Municipal 0; Sport Boys 3 Dep UPAO 3; Union Minas 1 Juan Aurich 0.

PERU – OPENING

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Universitario	9	6	3	0	18	7	21
Melgar	10	6	2	2	23	11	20
Alianza Atletico	10	5	1	4	19	16	16
Union Minas	10	5	1	4	12	13	16
Sport Boys	10	4	3	3	16	15	15
Alianza Lima	10	3	5	2	11	12	14
Cienciano	9	3	4	2	11	10	13
Sporting Cristal	9	3	2	4	12	11	11
Juan Aurich	10	1	7	2	11	12	10
Dep Pesquero	9	2	4	3	8	12	10
Dep UPAO	10	2	3	5	13	16	9
Dep Municipal	10	0	1	9	8	26	1

URUGUAY

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

Mar 19: Dep Maldonado 2 Huracan Buceo 0; Nacional 4 Bella Vista M 1; Penarol 2 Villa Espanola 2; Rentistas 4 Liverpool 0; River Plate 0 Juventud 0; Bella Vista P 3 Frontera Rivera 0; Defensor 2 Cerro 1; Racing 3 Tacuarembo 2; Danubio 4 Rocha 1.
Apr 2: Bella Vista M 3 Rentistas 2; Penarol 1 Defensor 4; Dep Maldonado 4 Villa Espanola 2; Huracan Buceo 1 Nacional 3; Danubio 6 Cerro 2; River Plate 1 Liverpool 2; Frontera Rivera 1 Juventud 1; Bella Vista P 3 Racing 1; Rocha 2 Tacuarembo 1.
Apr 9: Nacional 1 Cerro 1; Penarol 3 Bella Vista M 2; Liverpool 2 Huracan Buceo 0; Dep Maldonado 0 Rentistas 3; Juventud 1 Villa Espanola 1; Racing 3 River Plate 2; Frontera Rivera 1 Danubio 3; Tacuarembo 2 Bella Vista P 1; Defensor 5 Rocha 1.

URUGUAY – OPENING

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Nacional	7	5	2	0	14	4	17
Rentistas	7	4	2	1	12	4	14
Bella Vista M	7	4	1	2	14	11	13
Penarol	7	4	1	2	17	17	13
Defensor	7	4	0	3	17	10	12
Danubio	7	3	2	2	14	9	11
Juventud	7	2	4	1	5	4	10
Villa Espanola	7	2	3	2	11	11	9
Bella Vista P	7	3	0	4	9	9	9
Racing	7	2	3	2	12	13	9
Liverpool	7	3	0	4	10	13	9
Dep Maldonado	7	3	0	4	11	15	9
River Plate	7	2	2	3	11	10	8
Cerro	7	2	2	3	12	15	8
Tacuarembo	7	2	2	3	8	11	8
Rocha	7	2	1	4	12	19	7
Huracan Buceo	7	1	2	4	6	11	5
Frontera Rivera	7	1	1	5	9	18	4

VENEZUELA

CLOSING CHAMPIONSHIP

Mar 19: Dep Tachira 1 Ital-Chacao 1; Estudiantes 0 Carabobo 1; Caracas 1 Nacional 1; Inter El Vigia 1 Zulianos 1; Llaneros 3 Mineros Guayana 2; Trujillanos 1 FCU-ULA 0.
Apr 2: Ital-Chacao 1 Inter El Vigia 0; Mineros Guayana 1 Dep Tachira 2; Estudiantes 0 Llaneros 0; Zulianos 1 FCU-ULA 0; Nacional 1 Trujillanos 0; Carabobo 0 Caracas 0.
Apr 9: Caracas 2 Dep Tachira 0; Mineros Guayana 2 Ital-Chacao 1; Estudiantes 2 Inter El Vigia 0; Carabobo 0 FCU-ULA 1; Llaneros 4 Trujillanos 2; Nacional 2 Zulianos 1.

VENEZUELA – CLOSING

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ital-Chacao	17	10	4	3	28	11	34
Dep Tachira	17	9	6	2	24	11	33
Caracas	17	9	5	3	26	14	32
Estudiantes	17	8	4	5	20	17	28
Carabobo	17	7	5	5	18	12	26
Mineros Guayana	17	6	4	7	20	22	22
FCU-ULA	17	6	2	9	17	17	20
Nacional	17	4	7	6	17	17	19
Llaneros	17	4	5	8	19	37	17
Inter El Vigia	17	4	4	9	20	28	16
Zulianos	17	3	7	7	15	24	16
Trujillanos	17	3	5	9	16	25	14

CENTRAL & NORTH AMERICA

MEXICO

SUMMER CHAMPIONSHIP

Mar 18: Necaxa 0 Guadalajara 0; Tigres 5 Tecos UAG 1; Atletico Celaya 2 Toluca 3; Atlas 1 Monterrey 0; Puebla 3 Santos 1.
Mar 19: Pumas UNAM 2 Atletico Morelia 0; Leon 2 Atlante 2; Toros Neza 1 Cruz Azul 0; America 0 Pachuca 0.
Mar 22: Tigres 1 Toluca 2.
Mar 25: Tecos UAG 3 America 2; Monterrey 2 Atletico Celaya 2; Toluca 3 Leon 0; Cruz Azul 1 Atlas 1.
Mar 26: Pachuca 0 Toros Neza 1; Pumas UNAM 3 Necaxa 0; Atletico Morelia 2 Puebla 2; Atlante 0 Guadalajara 1; Santos 5 Tigres 0.
Mar 31: America 6 Santos 1.
Apr 1: Necaxa 4 Atlante 0; Tigres 3 Atletico Morelia 3; Atletico Celaya 1 Cruz Azul 0; Puebla 1 Pumas UNAM 3.
Apr 2: Guadalajara 1 Toluca 1; Leon 4 Monterrey 0; Toros Neza 1 Tecos UAG 2.
Apr 5: Monterrey 0 Tigres 0.
Apr 8: Toluca 2 Atlante 0; Cruz Azul 6 Leon 3; Monterrey 1 Guadalajara 1.
Apr 9: Pumas UNAM 0 Tigres 2; Pachuca 2 Atletico Celaya 0; Atletico Morelia 2 America 0; Necaxa 2 Puebla 2; Santos 2 Toros Neza 2.
Apr 12: Atlas 3 Pachuca 1.
Apr 15: Toluca 3 Necaxa 1; Tigres 0 Puebla 1; Atletico Celaya 3 Tecos UAG 2; Atlas 2 Santos 2.
Apr 16: Guadalajara 3 Cruz Azul 4; Leon 2 Pachuca 1; Toros Neza 1 Atletico Morelia 3; Atlante 1 Monterrey 1; America 1 Pumas UNAM 4.

GROUP 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Toluca	14	11	1	2	35	18	34
Pumas UNAM	14	6	3	5	24	21	21
Toros Neza	14	5	1	8	20	31	16
Leon	14	3	4	7	21	26	13
Tecos UAG	13	4	1	8	17	27	13

GROUP 2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Atletico Morelia	14	5	6	3	25	18	21
Puebla	14	5	5	4	23	23	20
Atletico Celaya	14	4	6	4	22	24	18
Cruz Azul	14	5	2	7	30	28	17
Monterrey	14	3	6	5	13	25	15

GROUP 3

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Santos	14	6	6	2	26	20	24
America	14	6	3	5	32	25	21
Atlas	13	6	3	4	27	22	21
Atlante	14	1	4	9	11	28	7

GROUP 4

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Guadalajara	14	6	6	2	21	13	24
Necaxa	14	5	6	3	24	19	21
Tigres	14	5	4	5	19	16	19
Pachuca	14	3	5	6	13	19	14

LEADING GOALSCORERS

13	Everaldo Bejines (Leon)
12	Agustin Delgado (Necaxa)
11	Sebastian Abreu (Tecos UAG)
10	Jared Borguetti (Santos)
10	Jose Cardozo (Toluca)
10	Luis Hernandez (Tigres)
10	Juan Palencia (Cruz Azul)
7	Carlos Hermosillo (America)
7	Federico Lagorio (Pumas UNAM)
7	Claudio Nunes (Tigres)

USA

Mar 25: Tampa Bay Mutiny 1 New England Revolution 0; Kansas City Wizards 4 Chicago Fire 3; Dallas Burn 0 Colorado Rapids 1; Columbus Crew 2 San Jose Earthquakes 1 (aet); DC United 0 LA Galaxy 4.
Mar 26: Miami Fusion 3 MetroStars 1.
Apr 1: Miami Fusion 0 San Jose Earthquakes 0 (aet); Columbus Crew 0 Chicago Fire 2; Kansas City Wizards 3 Colorado Rapids 0; Dallas Burn 1 Tampa Bay Mutiny 0; LA Galaxy 2 New England Revolution 2 (aet); MetroStars 3 DC United 2.
Apr 8: Colorado Rapids 1 Tampa Bay Mutiny 0; Miami Fusion 0 Kansas City Wizards 0 (aet); Columbus Crew 2 LA Galaxy 2 (aet); Dallas Burn 2 New England Revolution 1; DC United 3 Chicago Fire 2; San Jose Earthquakes 2 MetroStars 0.
Apr 15: MetroStars 0 Columbus Crew 1; New England Revolution 2 DC United 1 (aet); Tampa Bay Mutiny 2 Colorado Rapids 4; Chicago Fire 1 Miami Fusion 0; Kansas City Wizards 2 San Jose Earthquakes 0; LA Galaxy 2 Dallas Burn 1.

EASTERN DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Miami Fusion	5	1	3	1	4	3	6
New England	5	1	2	2	6	7	5
MetroStars	4	1	0	3	4	8	3
DC United	4	1	0	3	6	11	3

CENTRAL DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dallas Burn	5	3	0	2	8	6	9
Tampa Bay	5	3	0	2	10	5	9
Columbus Crew	5	2	1	2	6	10	7
Chicago Fire	5	2	0	3	10	11	6

WESTERN DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
LA Galaxy	5	3	2	0	12	6	11
Kansas City	4	3	1	0	9	3	10
Colorado Rapids	5	2	0	3	5	9	6
San Jose	4	1	1	2	3	4	4

LEADING GOALSCORERS

4	Ariel Graziani (Dallas Burn)
4	Cobi Jones (LA Galaxy)
4	Hristo Stoichkov (Chicago Fire)

AFRICA

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

FIRST ROUND

2nd legs
Apr 1: Jeanne d'Arc (Sen) 5 Mouloudia (Alg) 1
Jeanne d'Arc 6-2 on agg;
Tusker (Ken) 1 Al Ahly (Egy) 0
Al Ahly 3-2 on agg.
Apr 2: Tempete Mocaf (CAR) 1 Lobi Stars (Nig) 1
Lobi Stars 3-1 on agg;
Dragons l'Oueme (Ben) 2 Raja Casablanca (Mor) 2
Raja 5-3 on agg;
Djoliba (Mli) 1 ASFA (BuF) 1
Agg 3-3. Djoliba on away goals;
Primeiro Agosto (Ang) 4 Vita Club (Con) 0
Primeiro Agosto 5-2 on agg;
Horoya (Gui) 2 Hearts of Oak (Gha) 2
Hearts of Oak 4-3 on agg;
St Michel (Sey) 0 Highlanders (Zim) 2
Highlanders 3-0 on agg;
FC 105 (Gab) 1 Sable de Batie (Cam) 1
Sable 3-2 on agg;
Nkana FC (Zam) 3 USST (Reu) 0
Nkana 5-1 on agg;
Defence Force (Les) 1 Mamelodi Sundowns (SAf) 4
Mamelodi Sundowns 6-2 on agg;
Al Ahli (Lby) 0 Africa Sports (IvC) 2
Africa Sports 6-0 on agg;
Ferroviario Maputo (Moz) 1 Al Hilal (Sud) 1
Agg 2-2. Ferroviario 5-4 on pens;
Vital'O (Brd) 2 St George (Eth) 2
Vital'O 4-3 on agg.

Black Africa (Nam) withdrew from 1st round – Motema Pembe (DRC) walkover;
APR FC (Rwa) withdrew from 2nd leg against Esperance (Tun) – Esperance walkover

SECOND ROUND DRAW

Raja Casablanca v Jeanne d'Arc;
Al Ahly v Vital'O;
Esperance v Djoliba;
Lobi Stars v Primeiro Agosto;
Hearts of Oak v Motema Pembe;
Highlanders v Sable de Batie;
Nkana FC v Mamelodi Sundowns;
Africa Sports v Ferroviario Maputo.
1st legs May 5-7; 2nd legs May 26-28.

CUP-WINNERS CUP

FIRST ROUND

1st leg
Apr 2: Ndiambour (Sen) 2 ASEC Abidjan (IvC) 0.

2nd legs
Mar 31: SuperSport United (SAf) 2 Costa do Sol (Moz) 1
SuperSport 3-2 on agg;
Zamalek (Egy) 4 Young Africans (Tan) 0
Zamalek 5-1 on agg.
Apr 1: Al Merreikh (Sud) 2 Mbale Heroes (Uga) 0
Al Merreikh 4-1 on agg;
Royal Armed Forces (Mor) 1 Etoile Filante (BuF) 0
Royal Armed Forces 1-0 on agg;
Stade Malien (Mli) 3 AS Dragons (DRC) 0
Stade Malien 5-3 on agg;
Telecom Wanderers (Mwi) 2 Ethiopia Coffee (Eth) 1
Ethiopia Coffee 4-2 on agg;
USM Alger (Alg) 1 Jeunesse Sportive (Ngr) 0
USM 2-1 on agg.
Apr 2: Accra Great Olympics (Gha) 2 Al Ittihad (Lby) 0
Agg 2-2. Al Ittihad 3-2 on pens;
Agaza Lome (Tog) 0 Sagrada Esperance (Ang) 2
Sagrada 6-1 on agg;
Canon Yaounde (Cam) 3 Coastal Stars (Ken) 0
Canon Yaounde 4-0 on agg;
Club Africain (Tun) 3 Mogas '90 (Ben) 1
Club Africain 3-1 on agg;
Etoile du Congo (Con) 1 Plateau United (Nig) 0
Agg 3-3. Etoile du Congo on away goals;
St Louisienne (Reu) 4 FC Djivan (Mad) 2
St Louisienne 5-3 on agg;
USB (Gab) 2 Rayon Sports (Rwa) 1
Rayon 3-2 on agg;
Zamsure (Zam) 2 Mogoditshane Life Fighters (Bot) 1
Zamsure 4-2 on agg.
Apr 6: ASEC Abidjan 2 Ndiambour 0
Agg 3-3. Ndiambour on away goals.

SECOND ROUND DRAW

USM Alger v Stade Malien;
Zamalek v Ethiopia Coffee;
Club Africain v Etoile du Congo;
Royal Armed Forces v Rayon Sport;
Al Merreikh v St Louisienne;
Canon Yaounde v Zamsure;
Al Ittihad v SuperSport United;
Ndiambour v Sagrada Esperanca.
1st legs May 5-7; 2nd legs May 26-28.

CAF CUP

FIRST ROUND

1st legs
Mar 19: TP Mazembe (DRC) 4 Academica do Lobito (Ang) 0.
Mar 26: Compagnie Sucriere (Sen) 1 Real Banjul (Gam) 0.

2nd legs
Mar 31: Al Mahalla (Lby) 3 Ismailia (Egy) 2
Ismailia 7-4 on agg;
Mukura Victory (Rwa) 1 Awassa City (Eth) 0
Awassa 2-1 on agg.
Apr 1: Chingale (Moz) 0 Etoile Sahel (Tun) 1
Etoile 11-0 on agg;
Mochudi Centre Chiefs (Bot) 1 Mtibawa (Tan) 2
Mtibawa 5-1 on agg;
USFA (BuF) 2 CA Bizerte (Tun) 1
CA Bizerte 3-2 on agg;
USM Libreville (Gab) 2 Iwuanyanwu Nationale (Nig) 2
Iwuanyanwu 5-2 on agg.
Apr 2: Cape Coast Dwarfs (Gha) 3 USFAS (Mli) 0
Cape Coast Dwarfs 3-2 on agg;
DSA (Mad) 0 Nchanga Rangers (Zam) 1
Nchanga Rangers 2-0 on agg;
Mbabane Highlanders (Swa) 0 Kaizer Chiefs (SAf) 1
Kaizer Chiefs 6-2 on agg;
Real Banjul 0 Compagnie Sucriere 1
Compagnie Sucriere 2-0 on agg;
Shabana (Ken) 0 Hay Al Arab (Sau) 0
Hay Al Arab 2-0 on agg;
TP Mysteres (Con) 1 Cotonsport (Cam) 2
Cotonsport 4-1 on agg.
Apr 3: Academica do Lobito 2 TP Mazembe 3
TP Mazembe 7-2 on agg.

Semassi de Sokode (Tog) withdrew from 1st round – Stade Abidjan (IvC) walkover;
Aslad de Moundou (Chd) withdrew from 1st round – JS Kabylie (Alg) walkover;
St Anthony (Lbr) withdrew from 1st round – Wydad Casablanca (Mor) walkover.

SECOND ROUND DRAW

Ismailia v Hay Al Arab;
Mtibawa v Cotonsport;
Awassa City v Iwuanyanwu Nationale;
Etoile Sahel v Compagnie Sucriere;
Stade Abidjan v CA Bizerte;
Jeunesse Sportive v TP Mazembe;
Wydad Casablanca v Cape Coast Dwarfs;
Kaizer Chiefs v Nchanga Rangers.
1st legs May 5-7; 2nd legs May 26-28.

ASIA

ASIAN CUP QUALIFIERS

Group 1

03.08.99.....Oman-Kyrgyzstan.....3-0
03.08.99.....Iraq-Tajikistan.....2-1
05.08.99.....Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan.....2-3
05.08.99.....Iraq-Oman.....2-0
07.08.99.....Oman-Tajikistan.....1-2
07.08.99.....Iraq-Kyrgyzstan.....5-1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Iraq*	3	3	0	0	9	2	9
Tajikistan	3	2	0	1	6	5	6
Oman	3	1	0	2	4	4	3
Kyrgyzstan	3	0	0	3	3	11	0

All ties played in Tajikistan

Group 2

31.03.00.....Maldives-Iran 0-8
31.03.00.....Syria-Bahrain 1-0
02.04.00.....Bahrain-Maldives 4-1
02.04.00.....Iran-Syria 1-0
04.04.00.....Bahrain-Iran 1-0
04.04.00.....Syria-Maldives 6-0
09.04.00.....Syria-Maldives 2-1
09.04.00.....Iran-Bahrain 3-0
11.04.00.....Bahrain-Maldives 1-0
11.04.00.....Syria-Iran 1-1
13.04.00.....Bahrain-Syria 0-1
13.04.00.....Iran-Maldives 3-0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Iran*	6	4	1	1	16	2	13
Syria	6	4	1	1	11	3	13
Bahrain	6	3	0	3	6	6	9
Maldives	6	0	0	6	2	24	0

Ties played in Syria and Iran

Group 3

21.11.99.....Bangladesh-Uzbekistan 0-6
21.11.99.....UAE-India.....3-1
23.11.99.....Sri Lanka-Uzbekistan 0-6
23.11.99.....UAE-Bangladesh.....3-0
25.11.99.....Sri Lanka-Bangladesh 1-3
25.11.99.....India-Uzbekistan 2-3
27.11.99.....Sri Lanka-India.....1-3
27.11.99.....UAE-Uzbekistan.....0-1
29.11.99.....India-Bangladesh 2-2
29.11.99.....UAE-Sri Lanka 6-0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Uzbekistan*	4	4	0	0	16	2	12
UAE	4	3	0	1	12	2	9
India	4	1	1	2	8	9	4
Bangladesh	4	1	1	2	5	12	4
Sri Lanka	4	0	0	4	2	18	0

All ties played in the United Arab Emirates

Group 4

31.03.00.....Qatar-Palestine 1-0
31.03.00.....Jordan-Kazakhstan 0-1
02.04.00.....Palestine-Pakistan 2-0
02.04.00.....Qatar-Kazakhstan.....3-1
04.04.00.....Palestine-Jordan 1-5
04.04.00.....Qatar-Pakistan 5-0
06.04.00.....Kazakhstan-Palestine.....2-0
06.04.00.....Pakistan-Jordan 0-5
08.04.00.....Pakistan-Kazakhstan.....0-4
08.04.00.....Qatar-Jordan 2-2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Qatar*	4	3	1	0	11	3	10
Kazakhstan	4	3	0	1	8	3	9
Jordan	4	2	1	1	12	4	7
Palestine	4	1	0	3	3	8	3
Pakistan	4	0	0	4	0	16	0

All ties played in Qatar

Group 5

10.02.00.....Turkmenistan-Kuwait.....1-6
10.02.00.....Nepal-Yemen.....0-3
12.02.00.....Yemen-Turkmenistan.....0-1
12.02.00.....Bhutan-Nepal 0-3
14.02.00.....Kuwait-Bhutan 20-0
14.02.00.....Turkmenistan-Nepal.....5-0
16.02.00.....Kuwait-Yemen.....2-0
16.02.00.....Bhutan-Turkmenistan 0-8
18.02.00.....Yemen-Bhutan 11-2
18.02.00.....Nepal-Kuwait.....0-5

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Kuwait*	4	4	0	0	33	1	12
Turkmenistan	4	3	0	1	15	6	9
Yemen	4	2	0	2	14	5	6
Nepal	4	1	0	3	3	13	3
Bhutan	4	0	0	4	2	42	0

All ties played in Kuwait

Group 6

05.04.00.....Myanmar-Mongolia 2-0
05.04.00.....South Korea-Laos.....9-0
07.04.00.....Myanmar-Laos 2-0
07.04.00.....South Korea-Mongolia.....6-0
09.04.00.....Laos-Mongolia.....2-0
09.04.00.....South Korea-Myanmar 4-0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
South Korea*	3	3	0	0	19	0	9
Myanmar	3	2	0	1	4	4	6
Laos	3	1	0	2	2	11	3
Mongolia	3	0	0	3	0	10	0

All ties played in South Korea

Group 7

18.10.99.....Hong Kong-Cambodia 4-1
24.10.99.....Hong Kong-Indonesia.....1-1
30.10.99.....Cambodia-Indonesia 1-5
07.11.99.....Cambodia-Hong Kong 0-1
14.11.99.....Indonesia-Hong Kong.....3-1
20.11.99.....Indonesia-Cambodia 9-2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Indonesia*	4	3	1	0	18	5	10
Hong Kong	4	2	1	1	7	5	7
Cambodia	4	0	0	4	4	19	0

Ties played on a home and away basis

Group 8

25.03.00.....Thailand-North Korea 0-0
25.03.00.....Malaysia-Taiwan 3-0
27.03.00.....Taiwan-Thailand.....0-2
27.03.00.....North Korea-Malaysia 1-1
29.03.00.....Taiwan-North Korea 0-2
29.03.00.....Malaysia-Thailand.....3-2
04.04.00.....Taiwan-Malaysia.....3-2
04.04.00.....North Korea-Thailand 3-5
06.04.00.....Malaysia-North Korea 1-4
06.04.00.....Thailand-Taiwan.....1-0
08.04.00.....North Korea-Taiwan 1-0
08.04.00.....Thailand-Malaysia.....3-2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Thailand*	6	4	1	1	13	8	13
North Korea	6	3	2	1	11	7	11
Malaysia	6	2	1	3	12	13	7
Taiwan	6	1	0	5	3	11	3

Ties played in Malaysia and Thailand

Group 9

23.01.00.....Vietnam-Guam 11-0
23.01.00.....China-Philippines 8-0
26.01.00.....China-Guam 19-0
26.01.00.....Vietnam-Philippines 3-0
29.01.00.....Guam-Philippines.....0-2
29.01.00.....Vietnam-China.....0-2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
China*	3	3	0	0	29	0	9
Vietnam	3	2	0	1	14	2	6
Philippines	3	1	0	2	2	11	3
Guam	3	0	0	3	0	32	0

All ties played in Vietnam

Group 10

13.02.00.....Macao-Brunei.....1-0
13.02.00.....Singapore-Japan.....0-3
16.02.00.....Macao-Singapore.....0-1
16.02.00.....Japan-Brunei.....9-0
20.02.00.....Singapore-Brunei 1-0
20.02.00.....Macao-Japan 0-3

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Japan*	3	3	0	0	15	0	9
Singapore	3	2	0	1	2	3	6
Macao	3	1	0	2	1	4	3
Brunei	3	0	0	3	0	11	0

All ties played in Macao

**The 10 group winners join holders Saudi Arabia and hosts Lebanon in the finals tournament, to be played in October.*

CUP-WINNERS CUP

QUARTER-FINALS

WEST ASIA ZONE
1st legs
Jan 28: Al Ittihad (Sau) 1 Al Zawra (Irq) 2; Al Ahli (Sau) 6 Navbakhor Namangan (Uzb) 1.

2nd legs
Feb 1: Al Zawra 0 Al Ittihad 0
Al Zawra 2-1 on agg.
Feb 25: Navbakhor Namangan 2 Al Ahli 0
Al Ahli 6-3 on agg.

EAST ASIA ZONE
1st legs
Jan 22: South China (HK) 3 Bangkok Bank (Tha) 2.
Feb 26: Shimizu S-Pulse (Jap) 3 Anyang LG Cheetahs (SKo) 1.

2nd legs
Jan 30: Bangkok Bank 3 South China 0
Bangkok Bank 5-3 on agg.
Mar 1: Anyang LG Cheetahs 2 Shimizu S-Pulse 1
Shimizu 4-3 on agg.

SEMI-FINALS

Games played in Chiangmai, Thailand

Apr 13: Shimizu S-Pulse 0 Bangkok Bank 0
Shimizu 4-2 on pens;
Al Zawra 2 Navbakhor Namangan* 1 (aet).

**Navbakhor took the place of Al Ahli, who withdrew from the tournament after the quarter-final stage.*

FINAL

Apr 15 - Chiangmai, Thailand
Shimizu S-Pulse 1 (Ikeda 74)
Al Zawra 0
HT: 0-0

THIRD PLACE PLAY-OFF

Apr 15 - Chiangmai, Thailand
Bangkok Bank 3 (Thaveechalermdit pen 4, Sriaroon 36, Hatihakreangkrai 38)
Navbakhor Namangan 1 (Mirkholdirshaev 23)
HT: 3-1

JAPAN

FIRST STAGE

Mar 25: FC Tokyo 2 Nagoya Grampus Eight 1 (aet); Avispa Fukuoka 0 Kashima Antlers 1 (aet); JEF United Ichihara 1 Vissel Kobe 6; Shimizu S-Pulse 2 Kashiwa Reysol 1 (aet); Yokohama F Marinos 1 Jubilo Iwata 3; Cerezo Osaka 5 Verdy Kawasaki 2; Kyoto Purple Sanga 1 Gamba Osaka 0; Kawasaki Frontale 0 Sanfrecce Hiroshima 1.
Apr 1: Kashima Antlers 2 Yokohama F Marinos 3; Kashiwa Reysol 3 FC Tokyo 2 (aet); Jubilo Iwata 3 Cerezo Osaka 1; Vissel Kobe 0 Kawasaki Frontale 1; Gamba Osaka 0 Shimizu S-Pulse 1; Nagoya Grampus Eight 1 Avispa Fukuoka 2 (aet); Sanfrecce Hiroshima 2 Kyoto Purple Sanga 0; Verdy Kawasaki 0 JEF United Ichihara 1.
Apr 5: FC Tokyo 3 Jubilo Iwata 2; Shimizu S-Pulse 2 Kashima Antlers 1; Sanfrecce Hiroshima 1 Kashiwa Reysol 2; Yokohama F Marinos 1 Vissel Kobe 0; JEF United Ichihara 1 Cerezo Osaka 2 (aet); Kyoto Purple Sanga 0 Nagoya Grampus Eight 1; Avispa Fukuoka 0 Verdy Kawasaki 2; Kawasaki Frontale 2 Gamba Osaka 2 (aet).
Apr 8: Jubilo Iwata 2 Avispa Fukuoka 1; Kashiwa Reysol 2 Kyoto Purple Sanga 1 (aet); Verdy Kawasaki 1 Yokohama F Marinos 3; Vissel Kobe 1 Cerezo Osaka 2; Kashima Antlers 2 FC Tokyo 1; Nagoya Grampus Eight 1 Shimizu S-Pulse 0; JEF United Ichihara 1 Kawasaki Frontale 0; Gamba Osaka 1 Sanfrecce Hiroshima 2 (aet).

JAPAN – FIRST STAGE

	P	W1	W2	D	L	F	A	Pts
Jubilo Iwata	6	4	0	0	2	11	7	12
Kashiwa Reysol	6	2	3	0	1	10	6	12
Yokohama FM	6	4	0	0	2	10	8	12
Cerezo Osaka	6	3	1	0	2	15	11	11
FC Tokyo	6	3	1	0	2	11	8	11
Shimizu S-Pulse	6	3	1	0	2	9	7	11
Kashima Antlers	6	3	1	0	2	8	6	11
JEF United	6	3	0	1	2	11	10	10
Sanfrecce H	6	2	1	1	2	7	5	9
Vissel Kobe	6	2	0	1	3	9	6	7
Grampus Eight	6	2	0	0	4	4	6	6
Verdy Kawasaki	6	2	0	0	4	7	11	6
Avispa Fukuoka	6	1	1	0	4	5	9	5
Kawasaki Frontale	6	1	0	1	4	4	7	4
Kyoto PS	6	1	0	0	5	4	14	3
Gamba Osaka	6	0	0	2	4	5	9	2

W1 = win in 90 mins (3 pts); W2 = win in extra time (2 pts); Draw = 1 pt

WORLD CUP 2002 QUALIFYING

AFRICA

5 teams qualify

FIRST ROUND – 1ST LEGS

07.04.00.....Djibouti-DR Congo 1-1
07.04.00.....Mauritania-Tunisia 1-2
08.04.00.....Botswana-Zambia 0-1
08.04.00.....Guinea-Bissau-Togo 0-0
08.04.00.....Madagascar-Gabon 2-0
08.04.00.....Malawi-Kenya.....2-0
08.04.00.....Sao Tome e Principe-Sierra Leone.2-0
08.04.00.....Seychelles-Namibia.....1-1
08.04.00.....Tanzania-Ghana 0-1
08.04.00.....Uganda-Guinea.....4-4
09.04.00.....Benin-Senegal 1-1
09.04.00.....Cape Verde Islands-Algeria 0-0
09.04.00.....Central African Rep-Zimbabwe 0-1
09.04.00.....Chad-Liberia 0-1
09.04.00.....Equatorial Guinea-Congo.....1-3
09.04.00.....Eritrea-Nigeria 0-0
09.04.00.....Ethiopia-Burkina Faso 2-1
09.04.00.....Gambia-Morocco 0-1
09.04.00.....Lesotho-South Africa.....0-2
09.04.00.....Libya-Mali.....3-0
09.04.00.....Rwanda-Ivory Coast 2-2
09.04.00.....Sudan-Mozambique 1-0
09.04.00.....Swaziland-Angola.....0-1
19.04.00.....*Somalia-Cameroon
20.04.00.....*Mauritius-Egypt

Winners qualify for second round.
**Somalia and Mauritius forfeited the right to stage the first leg at home.*

SECOND ROUND

The 25 first round winners will be drawn into five groups of five, to be played on a round-robin basis. The five group winners qualify for the finals. Dates for the second round group matches are: June 16-18, 2000; July 7-9, 2000; January 26-28, 2001; February 23-25, 2001; March 9-11, 2001; April 20-22, 2001, May 4-6, 2001; June 1-3, 2001, July 13-15, 2001; July 27-29, 2001.

ASIA

2 or 3 qualify, plus hosts Japan and South Korea

FIRST ROUND

Group 1
Oman, Syria, Laos, Philippines

Group 2
Iran, Tajikistan, Myanmar, Guam

Group 3
Qatar, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Palestine

Group 4
Kuwait, Singapore, Bahrain, Kyrgyzstan

Group 5
Thailand, Lebanon, Sri Lanka, Pakistan

Group 6
Iraq, Kazakhstan, Nepal, Macao

Group 7
Uzbekistan, Jordan, Turkmenistan, Taiwan

Group 8
United Arab Emirates, India, Yemen, Brunei

Group 9
China, Indonesia, Maldives, Cambodia

Group 10

Saudi Arabia, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Mongolia

Groups played on a round-robin basis. The 10 winners qualify for second round.

SECOND ROUND

The 10 first round group winners will be drawn into two groups of five, to be played on a round-robin basis. The two group winners qualify directly for the finals. The two runners-up play-off home and away, the winners going on to meet a European group runner-up in a play-off. The winners of that tie qualify for the finals.

EUROPE

13 or 14 teams qualify, plus holders France

Group 1

Yugoslavia, Russia, Switzerland, Slovenia, Luxembourg, Faroe Islands

02.09.00 .....Faroe Islands-Slovenia
02.09.00 .....Luxembourg-Yugoslavia
02.09.00 .....Switzerland-Russia
07.10.00 .....Luxembourg-Slovenia
07.10.00 .....Switzerland-Faroe Islands
07.10.00 .....Yugoslavia-Russia
11.10.00 .....Russia-Luxembourg
11.10.00 .....Slovenia-Switzerland
11.10.00 .....Yugoslavia-Faroe Islands
24.03.01 .....Luxembourg-Faroe Islands
24.03.01 .....Russia-Slovenia
24.03.01 .....Yugoslavia-Switzerland
28.03.01 .....Russia-Faroe Islands
28.03.01 .....Slovenia-Yugoslavia
28.03.01 .....Switzerland-Luxembourg
02.06.01 .....Faroe Islands-Switzerland
02.06.01 .....Russia-Yugoslavia
02.06.01 .....Slovenia-Luxembourg
06.06.01 .....Faroe Islands-Yugoslavia
06.06.01 .....Luxembourg-Russia
06.06.01 .....Switzerland-Slovenia
01.09.01 .....Faroe Islands-Luxembourg
01.09.01 .....Slovenia-Russia
01.09.01 .....Switzerland-Yugoslavia
05.09.01 .....Faroe Islands-Russia
05.09.01 .....Luxembourg-Switzerland
05.09.01 .....Yugoslavia-Slovenia
06.10.01 .....Russia-Switzerland
06.10.01 .....Slovenia-Faroe Islands
06.10.01 .....Yugoslavia-Luxembourg

Group 2

Holland, Portugal, Rep of Ireland, Cyprus, Andorra, Estonia

16.08.00.....Estonia-Andorra
02.09.00.....Andorra-Cyprus
02.09.00.....Holland-Rep of Ireland
03.09.00.....Estonia-Portugal
07.10.00.....Andorra-Estonia
07.10.00.....Cyprus-Holland
07.10.00.....Portugal-Rep of Ireland
11.10.00.....Holland-Portugal
11.10.00.....Rep of Ireland-Estonia
15.11.00.....Cyprus-Andorra
14.02.01.....Portugal-Andorra
24.03.01.....Andorra-Holland
24.03.01.....Cyprus-Rep of Ireland
28.03.01.....Andorra-Rep of Ireland
28.03.01.....Cyprus-Estonia
28.03.01.....Portugal-Holland
25.04.01.....Holland-Cyprus
25.04.01.....Rep of Ireland-Andorra
02.06.01.....Estonia-Holland
02.06.01.....Rep of Ireland-Portugal
06.06.01.....Estonia-Rep of Ireland
06.06.01.....Portugal-Cyprus
15.08.01.....Estonia-Cyprus
01.09.01.....Andorra-Portugal
01.09.01.....Rep of Ireland-Holland
05.09.01.....Cyprus-Portugal
05.09.01.....Holland-Estonia
06.10.01.....Holland-Andorra
06.10.01.....Portugal-Estonia
06.10.01.....Rep of Ireland-Cyprus

Group 3

Czech Republic, Denmark, Bulgaria, Iceland, Northern Ireland, Malta

02.09.00.....Bulgaria-Czech Republic
02.09.00.....Iceland-Denmark
02.09.00.....Northern Ireland-Malta
07.10.00.....Bulgaria-Malta
07.10.00.....Czech Republic-Iceland
07.10.00.....Northern Ireland-Denmark
11.10.00.....Denmark-Bulgaria
11.10.00.....Iceland-Northern Ireland
11.10.00.....Malta-Czech Republic
24.03.01.....Bulgaria-Iceland
24.03.01.....Malta-Denmark
24.03.01.....Northern Ireland-Czech Republic
28.03.01.....Bulgaria-Northern Ireland
28.03.01.....Czech Republic-Denmark
25.04.01.....Malta-Iceland
02.06.01.....Denmark-Czech Republic
02.06.01.....Iceland-Malta
02.06.01.....Northern Ireland-Bulgaria
06.06.01.....Czech Republic-Northern Ireland
06.06.01.....Denmark-Malta
06.06.01.....Iceland-Bulgaria
01.09.01.....Denmark-Northern Ireland
01.09.01.....Iceland-Czech Republic
01.09.01.....Malta-Bulgaria
05.09.01.....Bulgaria-Denmark
05.09.01.....Czech Republic-Malta
05.09.01.....Northern Ireland-Iceland
06.10.01.....Czech Republic-Bulgaria
06.10.01.....Denmark-Iceland
06.10.01.....Malta-Northern Ireland

Group 4

Sweden, Turkey, Slovakia, Macedonia, Azerbaijan, Moldova

02/03.09.00.....Azerbaijan-Sweden
02/03.09.00.....Slovakia-Macedonia
02/03.09.00.....Turkey-Moldova
07/08.10.00.....Macedonia-Azerbaijan
07/08.10.00.....Moldova-Slovakia
07/08.10.00.....Sweden-Turkey
10/11.10.00.....Azerbaijan-Turkey
10/11.10.00.....Moldova-Macedonia
10/11.10.00.....Slovakia-Sweden
24/25.03.01.....Azerbaijan-Moldova
24/25.03.01.....Sweden-Macedonia
24/25.03.01.....Turkey-Slovakia
27/28.03.01.....Macedonia-Turkey
27/28.03.01.....Moldova-Sweden
27/28.03.01.....Slovakia-Azerbaijan
02/03.06.01.....Macedonia-Moldova
02/03.06.01.....Sweden-Slovakia
02/03.06.01.....Turkey-Azerbaijan
05/06.06.01.....Azerbaijan-Slovakia
05/06.06.01.....Sweden-Moldova
05/06.06.01.....Turkey-Macedonia
01/02.09.01.....Macedonia-Sweden
01/02.09.01.....Moldova-Azerbaijan
01/02.09.01.....Slovakia-Turkey
04/05.09.01.....Azerbaijan-Macedonia
04/05.09.01.....Slovakia-Moldova
04/05.09.01.....Turkey-Sweden
06/07.10.01.....Macedonia-Slovakia
06/07.10.01.....Moldova-Turkey
06/07.10.01.....Sweden-Azerbaijan

Group 5

Norway, Ukraine, Poland, Wales, Armenia, Belarus

02/03.09.00.....Belarus-Wales
02/03.09.00.....Norway-Armenia
02/03.09.00.....Ukraine-Poland
07/08.10.00.....Armenia-Ukraine
07/08.10.00.....Poland-Belarus
07/08.10.00.....Wales-Norway
10/11.11.00.....Belarus-Armenia
10/11.11.00.....Norway-Ukraine
10/11.11.00.....Poland-Wales
24/25.03.01.....Armenia-Wales
24/25.03.01.....Norway-Poland
24/25.03.01.....Ukraine-Belarus
27/28.03.01.....Belarus-Norway
27/28.03.01.....Poland-Armenia
27/28.03.01.....Wales-Ukraine
02/03.06.01.....Armenia-Belarus
02/03.06.01.....Ukraine-Norway
02/03.06.01.....Wales-Poland
05/06.06.01.....Armenia-Poland
05/06.06.01.....Norway-Belarus
05/06.06.01.....Ukraine-Wales
01/02.09.01.....Belarus-Ukraine
01/02.09.01.....Poland-Norway
01/02.09.01.....Wales-Armenia
04/05.09.01.....Belarus-Poland
04/05.09.01.....Norway-Wales
04/05.09.01.....Ukraine-Armenia
06/07.10.01.....Armenia-Norway
06/07.10.01.....Poland-Ukraine
06/07.10.01.....Wales-Belarus

Group 6

Belgium, Scotland, Croatia, Latvia, San Marino

02.09.00 .....Belgium-Croatia
02.09.00 .....Latvia-Scotland
07.10.00 .....Latvia-Belgium
07.10.00 .....San Marino-Scotland
11.10.00 .....Croatia-Scotland
15.11.00 .....San Marino-Latvia
14.02.01 .....Belgium-San Marino
24.03.01 .....Croatia-Latvia
24.03.01 .....Scotland-Belgium
28.03.01 .....Scotland-San Marino
25.04.01 .....Latvia-San Marino
02.06.01 .....Belgium-Latvia
02.06.01 .....Croatia-San Marino
06.06.01 .....Latvia-Croatia
06.06.01 .....San Marino-Belgium
01.09.01 .....Scotland-Croatia
05.09.01 .....Belgium-Scotland
05.09.01 .....San Marino-Croatia
06.10.01 .....Croatia-Belgium
06.10.01 .....Scotland-Latvia

Group 7

Spain, Austria, Israel, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Liechtenstein

02.09.00 .....Bosnia-Herzegovina-Spain
03.09.00 .....Israel-Liechtenstein
07.10.00 .....Liechtenstein-Austria
07.10.00 .....Spain-Israel
11.10.00 .....Austria-Spain
11.10.00 .....Israel-Bosnia-Herzegovina
24.03.01 .....Bosnia-Herzegovina-Austria
24.03.01 .....Spain-Liechtenstein
28.03.01 .....Austria-Israel
28.03.01 .....Liechtenstein-Bosnia-Herzegovina
02.06.01 .....Liechtenstein-Israel
02.06.01 .....Spain-Bosnia-Herzegovina
06.06.01 .....Austria-Liechtenstein
06.06.01 .....Israel-Spain
01.09.01 .....Bosnia-Herzegovina-Israel
01.09.01 .....Spain-Austria
05.09.01 .....Austria-Bosnia-Herzegovina
05.09.01 .....Liechtenstein-Spain
07.10.01 .....Bosnia-Herzegovina-Liechtenstein
07.10.01 .....Israel-Austria

Group 8

Romania, Italy, Lithuania, Hungary, Georgia

02.09.00.....Hungary-Italy
02.09.00.....Romania-Lithuania
07.10.00.....Italy-Romania
07.10.00.....Lithuania-Georgia
11.10.00.....Italy-Georgia
11.10.00.....Lithuania-Hungary
24.03.01.....Hungary-Lithuania
24.03.01.....Romania-Italy
28.03.01.....Georgia-Romania
28.03.01.....Italy-Lithuania
02.06.01.....Georgia-Italy
02.06.01.....Romania-Hungary
06.06.01.....Hungary-Georgia
06.06.01.....Lithuania-Romania
01.09.01.....Georgia-Hungary
01.09.01.....Lithuania-Italy
05.09.01.....Georgia-Lithuania
05.09.01.....Hungary-Romania
06.10.01.....Italy-Hungary
06.10.01.....Romania-Georgia

Group 9

Germany, England, Greece, Finland, Albania

02.09.00.....Finland-Albania
02.09.00.....Germany-Greece
07.10.00.....England-Germany
07.10.00.....Greece-Finland
11.10.00.....Albania-Greece
11.10.00.....Finland-England
24.03.01.....England-Finland
24.03.01.....Germany-Albania
28.03.01.....Albania-England
28.03.01.....Greece-Germany
02.06.01.....Finland-Germany
02.06.01.....Greece-Albania
06.06.01.....Albania-Germany
06.06.01.....Greece-England
01.09.01.....Albania-Finland
01.09.01.....Germany-England
05.09.01.....England-Albania
05.09.01.....Finland-Greece
06.10.01.....England-Greece
06.10.01.....Germany-Finland

Group winners qualify automatically for the finals. The nine group runners-up and the third-placed Asian team will be drawn in five head-to-head ties, the winners of which also qualify for the finals.

THE FOOTBALL CONFEDERATION

3 teams qualify

PRELIMINARY PHASE

Central American Zone Group A

El Salvador, Belize, Guatemala

05.03.00 .....El Salvador-Belize 5-0
19.03.00 .....*Belize-Guatemala 1-2
02.04.00 .....Guatemala-El Salvador.....0-1
16.04.00 .....Belize-El Salvador 1-3
07.05.00 .....El Salvador-Guatemala
20.05.00 .....**Guatemala-Belize
**In Panama City*
***In Tegucigalpa, Honduras*

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
El Salvador	3	3	0	0	9	1	9
Guatemala	2	1	0	1	2	2	3
Belize	3	0	0	3	2	10	0

Central American Zone Group B

Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama

04.03.00 .....Honduras-Nicaragua 3-0
19.03.00 .....Nicaragua-Panama 0-2
02.04.00 .....Panama-Honduras 1-0
16.04.00 .....Nicaragua-Honduras 0-1
07.05.00 .....Honduras-Panama
21.05.00 .....Panama-Nicaragua

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Honduras	3	2	0	1	4	1	6
Panama	2	2	0	0	3	0	6
Nicaragua	3	0	0	3	0	6	0

Group winners qualify for the overall confederation semi-final round. Group A runners-up play-off against Caribbean Zone Group 2 runners-up for a semi-final round place; Group B runners-up play-off against Caribbean Zone Group 3 runners-up for a semi-final round place.

Caribbean Zone first round

Group 1

05.03.00.....Cuba-Cayman Islands.....4-0
19.03.00.....Cayman Islands-Cuba.....0-0
.....*Cuba 4-0 on agg*
05.03.00.....St Lucia-Surinam.....1-0
19.03.00.....Surinam-St Lucia .....(aet) 1-0
.....*Agg 1-1. Surinam 3-1 on pens*
05.03.00.....Barbados-Grenada 2-2
18.03.00.....Grenada-Barbados 2-3
.....*Barbados 5-4 on agg*
11.03.00.....Aruba-Puerto Rico 4-2
18.03.00.....Puerto Rica-Aruba 2-2
.....*Aruba 6-4 on agg*

Group 2

05.03.00.....St Vincent-US Virgin Islands.....9-0
19.03.00.....US Virgin Islands-St Vincent.....1-5
.....*St Vincent 14-1 on agg*
05.03.00.....British Virgin Is-Bermuda 1-5
19.03.00.....Bermuda-British Virgin Is 9-0
.....*Bermuda 14-1 on agg*
18.03.00.....St Kitts-Turks & Caicos Is.....8-0
21.03.00.....Turks & Caicos Is-St Kitts* 0-6
.....*St Kitts 14-0 on agg*
Guyana v Antigua & Barbuda – Guyana suspended by FIFA; Antigua & Barbuda went through to second round.
**2nd leg also played in St Kitts*

Group 3

04.03.00.....Trinidad & Tob-Dutch Antilles 5-0
18.03.00.....Dutch Antilles-Trinidad & Tob 1-1
.....*Trinidad & Tobago 6-1 on agg*
05.03.00.....Anguilla-Bahamas 1-3
19.03.00.....Bahamas-Anguilla 2-1
.....*Bahamas 5-2 on agg*

05.03.00.....Dominican Rep-Montserrat 3-0
19.03.00.....Montserrat-Dominican Rep 1-3
.....*Dominican Republic 6-1 on agg*
11.03.00.....Haiti-Dominica.....4-0
19.03.00.....Dominica-Haiti.....1-3
.....*Haiti 7-1 on agg*

Caribbean Zone second round

Group 1
01.04.00.....Aruba-Barbados 1-3
16.04.00.....Barbados-Aruba 4-0
.....*Barbados 7-1 on agg*
02.04.00.....Cuba-Surinam 1-0
16.04.00.....Surinam-Cuba 0-0
.....*Cuba 1-0 on agg*

Group 2
16.04.00.....Antigua & Barbuda-Bermuda 0-0
23.04.00.....Bermuda-Antigua & Barbuda
16.04.00.....St Vincent-St Kitts 1-0
22.04.00.....St Kitts-St Vincent

Group 3
01.04.00.....Haiti-Bahamas.....9-0
16.04.00.....Bahamas-Haiti.....0-4
.....*Haiti 13-0 on agg*
02.04.00.....Trinidad & Tob-Dominican Rep 3-0
16.04.00.....Dominican Rep-Trinidad & Tob 0-1
.....*Trinidad & Tobago 4-0 on agg*

Second-round winners meet in a group Final. The three Final winners qualify for the overall confederation semi-final round.
Group 1 runners-up play-off against Canada for a semi-final round place; Group 2 runners-up play-off against Central American Zone Group A runners-up for a semi-final round place; Group 3 runners-up play off against Central American Zone Group B runners-up for a semi-final round place.

SEMI-FINAL ROUND

Costa Rica, Jamaica, Mexico and the USA qualify directly for the semi-final round. They and the eight qualifiers from the Preliminary Phase will be drawn into three groups of four, played on a round-robin basis.The top two from each group qualify for a final round group of six.

FINAL ROUND

The six semi-final round qualifiers meet in a round-robin group. The top three qualify for the finals.

OCEANIA

0 or 1 teams qualify

FIRST ROUND

Group 1

Australia, Tonga, Fiji, American Samoa, Samoa
Ties to be played in June 2001 in Australia.

Group 2

New Zealand, Tahiti, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Cook Islands
Ties to be played in March/April 2001 in Auckland, NZ.

Groups played on round-robin basis. Winners meet in a two-leg play-off. Winners of the play-off will play home and away against the fifth-placed South American country for a place in the finals.

SOUTH AMERICA

4 or 5 teams qualify

Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela

28.03.00.....Colombia-Brazil.....0-0
29.03.00.....Argentina-Chile 4-1
29.03.00.....Ecuador-Venezuela 2-0
29.03.00.....Peru-Paraguay 2-0
29.03.00.....Uruguay-Bolivia.....1-0
26.04.00.....Bolivia-Colombia
26.04.00.....Brazil-Ecuador
26.04.00.....Chile-Peru
26.04.00.....Paraguay-Uruguay
26.04.00.....Venezuela-Argentina
03.06.00.....Paraguay-Ecuador
03.06.00.....Uruguay-Chile
04.06.00.....Argentina-Bolivia
04.06.00.....Colombia-Venezuela
04.06.00.....Peru-Brazil
28.06.00.....Brazil-Uruguay
28.06.00.....Venezuela-Bolivia
29.06.00.....Chile-Paraguay
29.06.00.....Colombia-Argentina
29.06.00.....Ecuador-Peru
18.07.00.....Paraguay-Brazil
18.07.00.....Uruguay-Venezuela
19.07.00.....Argentina-Ecuador
19.07.00.....Bolivia-Chile
19.07.00.....Peru-Colombia
25.07.00.....Ecuador-Colombia
25.07.00.....Uruguay-Peru
25.07.00.....Venezuela-Chile
26.07.00.....Brazil-Argentina
27.07.00.....Bolivia-Paraguay
15.08.00.....Chile-Brazil
15.08.00.....Colombia-Uruguay
16.08.00.....Argentina-Paraguay
16.08.00.....Ecuador-Bolivia
16.08.00.....Peru-Venezuela
02.09.00.....Chile-Colombia
02.09.00.....Paraguay-Venezuela
03.09.00.....Brazil-Bolivia
03.09.00.....Peru-Argentina
03.09.00.....Uruguay-Ecuador
07.10.00.....Colombia-Paraguay
08.10.00 ....Argentina-Uruguay
08.10.00.....Bolivia-Peru
08.10.00.....Ecuador-Chile
08.10.00.....Venezuela-Brazil
14.11.00.....Brazil-Colombia
14.11.00.....Paraguay-Peru
15.11.00.....Bolivia-Uruguay
15.11.00.....Chile-Argentina
15.11.00.....Venezuela-Ecuador
27.03.01.....Argentina-Venezuela
27.03.01.....Ecuador-Brazil
27.03.01.....Peru-Chile
28.03.01.....Colombia-Bolivia
28.03.01.....Uruguay-Paraguay
24.04.01.....Chile-Uruguay
24.04.01.....Ecuador-Paraguay
24.04.01.....Venezuela-Colombia
25.04.01.....Bolivia-Argentina
25.04.01.....Brazil-Peru
02.06.01.....Paraguay-Chile
02.06.01.....Peru-Ecuador
03.06.01.....Argentina-Colombia
03.06.01.....Bolivia-Venezuela
03.06.01.....Uruguay-Brazil
14.08.01.....Chile-Bolivia
14.08.01.....Venezuela-Uruguay
15.08.01.....Brazil-Paraguay
15.08.01.....Colombia-Peru
15.08.01.....Ecuador-Argentina
04.09.01.....Chile-Venezuela
04.09.01.....Peru-Uruguay
05.09.01.....Argentina-Brazil
05.09.01.....Colombia-Ecuador
05.09.01.....Paraguay-Bolivia
06.10.01.....Bolivia-Ecuador
06.10.01.....Brazil-Chile
06.10.01.....Paraguay-Argentina
06.10.01.....Uruguay-Colombia
06.10.01.....Venezuela-Peru
07.11.01.....Argentina-Peru
07.11.01.....Bolivia-Brazil
07.11.01.....Colombia-Chile
07.11.01.....Ecuador-Uruguay
07.11.01.....Venezuela-Paraguay
14.11.01.....Brazil-Venezuela
14.11.01.....Chile-Ecuador
14.11.01.....Paraguay-Colombia
14.11.01.....Peru-Bolivia
14.11.01.....Uruguay-Argentina

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Argentina	1	1	0	0	4	1	3
Ecuador	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
Peru	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
Uruguay	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Brazil	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Colombia	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Bolivia	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Paraguay	1	0	0	1	0	2	0
Venezuela	1	0	0	1	0	2	0
Chile	1	0	0	1	1	4	0

Round-robin league system. Top four teams qualify automatically for the finals. Fifth-placed team play off against winners of Oceania section for a place in the finals.

SQUAD LISTS 2000

USA

CHICAGO FIRE

GOALKEEPERS

1	Chris SNITKO	23.01.73
18	Zach THORNTON	10.10.73

DEFENDERS

12	Carlos BOCANEGRA	25.05.79
2	CJ BROWN	15.06.75
5	Lubos KUBIK (Cze)	20.01.64
17	Andrew LEWIS	10.07.74
6	Tom SOEHN	15.04.66
3	Evan WHITFIELD	23.06.77

MIDFIELDERS

14	Chris ARMAS	27.08.72
7	DaMarcus BEASLEY	24.05.82
4	Sam GEORGE	29.06.70
11	Diego GUTIERREZ	03.11.72
19	Yuri LAVRINENKO	12.06.77
15	Jesse MARSCH	08.11.73
10	Peter NOWAK (Pol)	05.07.64

FORWARDS

21	Dema KOVALENKO	28.08.77
9	Ante RAZOV	02.03.74
8	Hristo STOICHKOV (Bul)	08.02.66
16	Josh WOLFF	25.02.77
22	John WOLYNIEC	24.01.77

COACH

Bob BRADLEY

COLORADO RAPIDS

GOALKEEPERS

24	Adin BROWN	27.05.78
1	David KRAMER	01.08.72

DEFENDERS

17	Marcelo BALBOA	08.08.67
22	Joey DiGIAMARINO	06.04.77
15	Tahj JAKINS	11.11.75
3	Lance KEY	27.07.78
14	Chris MARTINEZ	25.12.70
2	Keyeno THOMAS (T&T)	29.12.77
8	Seth TREMBLY	21.03.82
7	David VAUDREUIL	21.12.66
4	Scott VERMILLION	23.12.76

MIDFIELDERS

13	Kevin ANDERSON	07.09.71
5	Jason BENT (Can)	08.03.77
9	Paul BRAVO	19.07.68
21	Paul DOUGHERTY	12.05.66
12	Wes HART	14.09.77
10	Anders LIMPAR (Swe)	24.09.65
16	Jason MOORE	04.04.78
6	Ross PAULE	04.04.76

FORWARDS

	Junior AGOGO (Gha/Eng)	01.08.79
11	Jorge DELY VALDES (Pan)	12.03.67
18	Jeff DiMARIA	15.05.77
20	Henry ZAMBRANO (Col)	07.08.73

COACH

Glenn MYERNICK

COLUMBUS CREW

GOALKEEPERS

1	Mark DOUGHERTY	07.11.67
18	Matt NAPOLEON	18.08.77

DEFENDERS

5	Matt CHULIS	29.08.77
3	Michael CLARK	16.12.72
15	Mike DUHANEY	05.04.74
4	Mario GORI (Arg)	06.01.73
2	Mike LAPPER	28.08.70
22	Dominic SCHELL	27.07.77
6	Todd YEAGLEY	20.09.72

MIDFIELDERS

7	Roland AGUILERA (Bol)	07.12.78
24	John DeBRITO	03.12.68
13	Ansil ELCOCK (T&T)	17.03.69
12	Jason FARRELL	31.12.70
10	Brian MAISONNEUVE	28.06.73
14	John Wilmar PEREZ (Col)	02.02.70
16	Rob SMITH	20.08.73
19	Robert WARZYCHA (Pol)	20.08.63
17	Brian WEST	10.06.78
21	Brian WINTERS	31.12.77

FORWARDS

11	Jeff CUNNINGHAM	21.08.76
23	Christof LINDENMAYER	21.04.77
20	Brian McBRIDE	19.06.72
9	Dante WASHINGTON	21.11.70

COACH

Tom FITZGERALD

DALLAS BURN

GOALKEEPERS

1	Mark DODD	14.09.65
22	Matt JORDAN	13.10.75

DEFENDERS

2	Eric DADE	19.01.70
10	Ricardo IRIBARREN (Arg)	11.02.67
12	Brandon POLLARD	09.10.73
17	Jorge RODRIGUEZ (EIS)	20.05.71
7	Mark SANTEL	05.07.68

MIDFIELDERS

6	Lazo ALAVANJA	18.01.77
4	Paul BROOME	06.06.76
23	Sergi DANIV (Ukr)	23.08.75
15	Chad DEERING	02.09.70
41	Ted ECK	14.07.66
18	Richard FARRER	09.04.71
13	Brian HAYNES	07.05.62
8	Oscar PAREJA (Col)	10.08.68
24	Alejandro RINCON	03.02.77
5	Kirk WILSON	07.10.77

FORWARDS

20	Ariel GRAZIANI (Arg)	07.06.71
9	Jason KREIS	29.12.72
16	Aleksey KOROL	14.10.77
19	Bobby RHINE	18.04.76

COACH

David DIR

DC UNITED

GOALKEEPERS

22	Tom PRESTHUS	05.04.75
2	Mark SIMPSON	18.03.66

DEFENDERS

12	Jeff AGOOS	02.05.68
5	Geoff AUNGER (Can)	04.02.68
31	Eric DENTON	08.02.78
18	Carlos LLAMOSA	30.06.69
4	Clint PEAY	16.09.73
23	Eddie POPE	24.12.73
3	Carey TALLEY	08.08.76

MIDFIELDERS

32	Stephen ARMSTRONG (Eng)	23.07.76
6	Judah COOKS	29.11.76
33	Micah COOKS	02.07.81
10	Marco ETCHEVERRY (Bol)	26.09.70
21	David HAYES	24.05.76
11	John MAESSNER	02.06.69
14	Ben OLSEN	03.05.77
8	Antonio OTERO	20.05.77
19	Mike SLIVINSKI	31.10.74
16	Richie WILLIAMS	03.06.70

FORWARDS

17	Chris ALBRIGHT	14.01.79
27	Mike BURKE	25.02.77
30	Bobby CONVEY	27.05.83
9	Jaime MORENO (Bol)	19.01.74
28	Sergio SALAS	21.03.81
7	AJ WOOD	17.08.73

COACH

Thomas RONGEN

KANSAS CITY WIZARDS

GOALKEEPERS

1	Tony MEOLA	21.02.69
25	Bo OSHONIYI	03.11.71

DEFENDERS

3	Nick GARCIA	09.04.79
14	Michael GREEN	16.07.78
20	Uche OKAFOR (Nig)	08.08.67
4	Brandon PRIDEAUX	16.08.76
6	Peter VERMES	21.01.66
15	Kerry ZAVAGNIN	02.07.74

MIDFIELDERS

13	Vicente FIGUEROA	22.10.77
21	Francisco GOMEZ	25.01.79
19	Chris HENDERSON	11.12.70
5	Brian JOHNSON	07.03.74
10	Mo JOHNSTON (Sco)	13.04.63
17	Chris KLEIN	04.01.76
2	Matt McKEON	24.09.74
16	John WILSON	26.10.77

FORWARDS

8	Chris BROWN	10.03.77
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12	Peter BYARUHANGA	18.08.79
22	Gary GLASGOW (T&T)	13.05.76
7	Miklos MOLNAR (Den)	10.04.70
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1	Matt REIS	28.03.75

DEFENDERS

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20	Paul CALIGIURI	09.03.64
16	Joe FRANCHINO	08.08.76
4	Robin FRASER	17.12.66
	Adam FRYE	15.02.74
17	Ezra HENDRICKSON	16.01.72
5	Steve JOLLEY	15.10.75
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12	Simon ELLIOTT (NZ)	06.10.76
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14	Clint MATHIS	25.11.76
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18	Tim HOWARD	06.03.79

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4	Thomas DOOLEY	12.05.61
10	Lothar MATTHAUS (Ger)	21.03.61
12	Mike PETKE	30.01.76
3	Mark SEMIOLI	20.03.68
6	Steve SHAK	08.02.78

MIDFIELDERS

7	Mark CHUNG	18.06.70
13	Nino DA SILVA	26.05.79
5	Mohammad KHAKPOUR (Irn)	20.02.69
20	Brian KELLY	06.10.74
19	Miles JOSEPH	02.05.74
2	Orlando PEREZ	12.07.77
9	Tab RAMOS	21.09.66
8	Billy WALSH	07.10.75

FORWARDS

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14	Adolfo VALENCIA (Col)	06.02.68
11	Petter VILLEGAS	15.11.75

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26	Garth LAGERWEY	12.12.72
18	Nick RIMANDO	17.06.79

DEFENDERS

	Jeremy ALDRICH	26.02.77
2	Leo CULLEN	26.02.76
7	Brian KAMLER	12.02.72
25	Pablo MASTROENI	29.08.76
3	Francis OKAROH (Nig)	25.08.63
4	Tim SAHAYDAK	01.06.77

MIDFIELDERS

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23	Jeff BILYK	07.05.77
20	Henry GUTIERREZ	28.08.68
6	Jay HEAPS	02.08.76
5	Martin MACHON (Gtm)	04.02.73
15	Tyrone MARSHALL	12.11.74
	Maurizio ROCHA (Bol)	02.08.76
14	Jim ROONEY	09.09.68
8	Nelson VARGAS	06.08.74
10	Andy WILLIAMS (Jam)	23.09.77

FORWARDS

9	Roy LASSITER	09.03.69
17	Diego SERNA (Col)	02.10.73
16	WELTON (Bra)	17.04.75
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1	Jurgen SOMMER	27.02.69

DEFENDERS

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3	Dan CALICHMAN	21.02.68
5	Ted CHRONOPOULOS	16.09.72
2	Brian DUNSETH	02.03.77
12	Adam EYRE	07.01.78

MIDFIELDERS

14	Leonel ALVAREZ (Col)	30.07.65
15	Shaker ASAD	18.08.79
8	Imad BABA	15.03.74
6	John HARKES	08.03.67
7	Ivan McKINLEY	15.06.69
16	Carlos PARRA	03.02.77
19	Rusty PIERCE	24.07.79
10	Mauricio RAMOS (Bol)	23.09.69
9	Johnny TORRES	24.04.76

FORWARDS

17	Jamar BEASLEY	11.10.79
13	Wolde HARRIS (Jam)	26.01.74
29	Eduardo HURTADO (Ecu)	02.12.69
18	Paul KEEGAN (Ire)	30.12.72
77	William SUNSING (CR)	12.05.77
20	Fabio ZUNIGA	11.06.81

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Fernando CLAVIJO

SAN JOSE EARTHQUAKES

GOALKEEPERS

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0	Jon CONWAY	06.05.77

DEFENDERS

24	Wade BARRETT	23.06.76
6	Jamie CLARK	13.12.76
17	Jim CONRAD	22.02.77
3	John DOYLE	16.04.66
5	Gabe EASTMAN	07.03.77
19	Mauricio WRIGHT (CR)	20.12.70

MIDFIELDERS

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27	Dario BROSE	27.01.70
7	Justin EVANS	31.01.77
18	Wojtek KRAKOWIAK (Pol)	06.08.76
10	Travis MULRAINE (T&T)	02.05.77
8	Richard MULROONEY	03.11.76
14	Esmundo RODRIGUEZ	25.05.77
23	Mauricio SOLIS (CR)	13.12.72
13	Ryan TINSLEY	01.10.71

FORWARDS

11	Khodadad AZIZI (Irn)	22.06.71
20	Ronald CERRITOS (EIS)	03.01.75
15	Ian RUSSELL	30.08.75
16	Abdul THOMPSON CONTEH (SLe)	02.07.70

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Lothar OSIANDER

TAMPA BAY MUTINY

GOALKEEPERS

1	Scott GARLICK	29.05.72
22	Andy KIRK	03.10.77
30	Matt NYMAN	16.09.76

DEFENDERS

18	Joseph ADDO	21.09.71
20	Chris HOUSER	09.03.73
33	Ritchie KOTSCHAU	22.11.75
5	Chad McCARTY	05.10.77
4	Steve TRITTSCHUH	24.04.65

MIDFIELDERS

16	Kalin BANKOV (Bul)	12.05.65
23	Daniel HERNANDEZ	23.07.76
3	Josh KELLER	16.02.75
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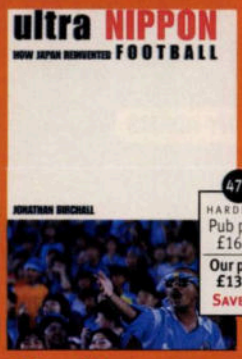

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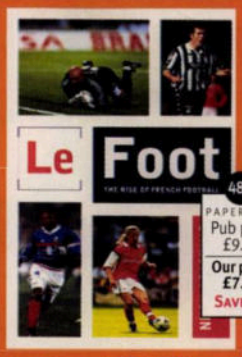

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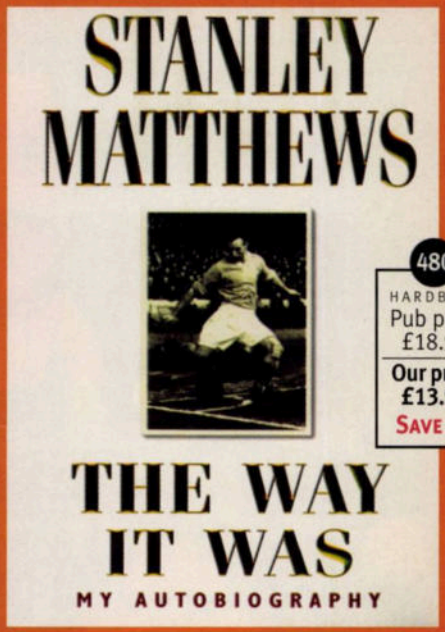

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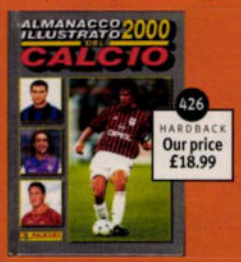

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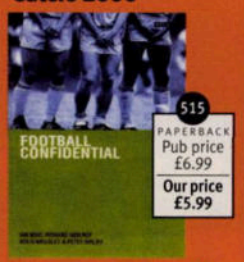

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Salt in Zoff's gaping wound

Defeat by Spain has increased the pressure on the national coach, writes Paddy Agnew

AS IF the debacle of the Italian mass exodus from the UEFA Cup at the beginning of March was not bad enough, Italian soccer suffered another blow to its pride when Dino Zoff's national side were completely outplayed in the 2-0 friendly defeat by Spain in Barcelona at the end of March.

Just to make matters a deal worse, one week later and again in Spain, the remaining Italian representatives in European club competition, Lazio, were humiliated in a 5-2 drubbing by Valencia in the Champions League quarter-final first leg.

From disaster to disaster – can this really be happening to a football school that, at club level at least, has dominated in Europe for the last decade and more?

Certainly one or two commentators have been tempted to arrive at some understandably negative conclusions.

Gianni Mura, of Rome daily *La Repubblica* and one of the most astute Italian critics, had few doubts, concluding on the day after the defeat by Spain: "You would have to have blind faith to consider Italy one of the favourites for the European Championships."

By the standards of some, that comment was mild. Others had rubbished Zoff's team after they were consistently outplayed and outmanoeuvred by the Spanish. Not even the absence of injured first-choice players such as Christian Vieri and Alessandro Nesta offered a tolerable excuse.

This latest setback, of course, came at the end of a disappointing winter which saw Italy beaten by Denmark and Belgium (both at home). Little wonder that when Zoff flashed up on our TV screens for his ritual post-match, touchline interview, his normally expressionless features had transformed themselves into those of a man on his way to the gallows.

"They played a lot better than us," he said, in the understatement of the season.

Later, at a post-match press conference, Zoff argued that he still had time to make improvements in view of the Euro 2000 finals, indicating that the time for the sort of experimentation which saw him field seven second-half substitutes was over.

"I tried a lot of new things out tonight because I had to give everybody a chance," he said. "There's still time to work on the team and I'm not worried."

Intriguingly, several of his players sounded less than worried, too. Midfielder Gigi Di Biagio, for example, argued that Italy had more than matched Spain in a first half that ended 0-0, saying: "We're getting used to losing and that's something you've got to avoid at all costs because, mentally, it causes you a whole heap of problems. I'd say, though, that we played better tonight than in other games.

"Twice we sent a man clean through in the first half. It is true that Spain were knocking the ball around much better than us but only square passes, they weren't going forward that much."

It was left to captain Paolo Maldini to remind us of one of the sacred laws of Italian soccer. Namely, that Italy never play well in friendlies. Furthermore, Maldini pointed a finger at the stress and strain of the Serie A championship when saying: "The fact that we gave away two headed goals from corner kicks is a bad sign and the blame lies with the stress of our League.

"We find it difficult to settle down and play together, forgetting what happened just two days previously in the League. When we get together in May for our training camp before Euro 2000, it'll be entirely different. When it really begins to matter, Italy start to play."

It had better be thus. Maldini may, of course, be right. Italy do, indeed, often perform badly in friendlies. On top of that, Zoff rang so many changes for the games against Sweden (in February) and Spain that they are probably unreliable indicators as to the true potential of his ideal first-choice side.

Pain in Spain...Gianluca Zambrotta tries to keep Italy moving

But, there's the rub. At least two elements in that ideal side, striker Vieri and defender Nesta, have spent a worrying amount of time on the injured list. Another worry is the simple thought that it has been a long time since we last saw Italy give a thoroughly convincing performance.

We have said it before, but it has to be repeated – there is every reason to believe that this Italy will prove too short on quality to make a big impact at Euro 2000.

While the national team were struggling in Barcelona, the Serie A title contest between Lazio and Juventus continued to rage, heated up by Juve's consecutive losses to Milan and then, most painfully, to Lazio themselves in an eagerly awaited head-to-head. Lazio's late run has at least had the merit of enlivening a title battle that had looked too easy to believe for Juventus.

A final thought for little Verona, the side that last grabbed international headlines when winning the Italian title in 1985, under the guidance of Dane Preben Elkjaer and German Hans-Peter Briegel. Winners of Serie B last season, Verona seemed headed back down by early February when, lying third from bottom in the table, they entertained Fiorentina.

But a 2-2 draw prompted a remarkable 10-match unbeaten run that has taken the side into the relatively tranquil waters of mid-table. Watch out for coach Cesare Prandelli (a former Juventus player) and midfielder Christian Brocchi, whose contribution to Verona's success story may well earn them a promotion to a bigger, more famous club at the end of the season.

Filippo's little brother has hit the big time at last

"WHEN Pippo [Filippo] rang me on Sunday to tell me that I had been called up by Italy, I thought he was pulling my leg. It wouldn't have been the first time, you know."

The speaker is 24-year-old Simone Inzaghi, Lazio striker and younger brother of Juventus counterpart, 26-year-old Filippo. Simone's comments refer to Italy coach Dino Zoff's squad for Italy's 2-0 defeat by Spain in March, a game in which both Inzaghis played (although not simultaneously) and which marked the international debut of Inzaghi the Younger.

Simone's comment also revealed something of the close-knit relationship between Italy's two most famous footballing brothers, who have rarely been out of the news this season.

Indeed, one of the standard jokes goes: "I'll tell you one thing about this year's title contest – Inzaghi's team will win."

It not only betrays the fact that the championship contest has been dominated by two teams – Juventus and Lazio – but it also underlines the extent to which both brothers have become key figures for their clubs.

In the case of Filippo, that is nothing new since he is now a 19-times capped international with three seasons and two Serie A titles with Juventus to his name.

In the case of Simone, however, this season has marked his definitive arrival in the big time. When Lazio splashed out £10million for him last summer, many wondered about the wisdom of the purchase, even though his 15 Serie A goals last season had been a major factor in ensuring that little Piacenza avoided relegation.

Simone arrived at a Lazio club that already had plenty of firepower in the shape of Alen Boksic, Marcelo Salas, and Roberto Mancini, not to mention Kennet Andersson.

It seemed that he would be filling the role of bit-part player – but from the beginning he established his credentials, winning a place in the line-up for the first big game of the season, a 1-0 win against Manchester United in the European Super Cup.

Used sparingly throughout the season by coach Sven Goran Eriksson, Simone's definitive consecration (certainly in the eyes of Lazio fans) came on the March night when he scored four goals against Marseille to power Lazio to a badly needed 5-1 Champions League win. Among the first to get in touch was Filippo. Within minutes of the final whistle, he was on the cell-phone to his kid brother to offer his congratulations on a performance that might even have yielded a fifth goal, since Simone missed both a penalty and a couple of clear chances during a dominant Lazio display.

"I'm not surprised by Simone's four goals. I knew he would have a good game. I just hope that he keeps on scoring lots of goals in the Champions League and perhaps rather less in Serie A!"

Filippo's enthusiasm for his brother's achievements have to do with more than just family pride. For some years now, he has been telling reporters that Simone "is going to be even better than me".

Until Simone started to score goals for Piacenza, most pundits took those words with a very large pinch of salt, generally ignoring the younger Inzaghi in his days with sides such as Carpi, Novara, Lumezzane and Brescello in the Third and Fourth Divisions.

After all, a recent famous footballer in these parts, a certain Diego Maradona, recommended two brothers, Hugo and Lalo, who both turned out to be rather less than the genuine professional article.

That scepticism is now a matter of the past. Simone's four goals against Marseille were followed by an arguably much more important one in their vital 2-1 Champions League win at Chelsea that put Lazio into the quarter-finals.

Given the quality of Simone's first season with Lazio, there seems little doubt that from now on there will be two, not one, Inzaghis in the Italian top flight.

Just over an inch taller than Filippo and more than a stone heavier, Simone tends to be more physically combative but slightly slower than his elder brother. For all that, however, the two play a very similar game, using pace and anticipation to beat the offside trap.

That very similarity may work against them at international level since many coaches, including Zoff, seem to see them as being in contention for the same role rather than as complementary figures in attack.

The two Inzaghis have played together before, however, in the mid-1980s when little Simone came on alongside his big brother in an Under-11 game for their local parish side of San Nicolo, near Piacenza. Those were different times, when Simone once managed the remarkable haul of 67 goals in a season. With typical matter-of-factness, their father, Giancarlo, plays down Simone's early exploits, saying: "He scored all those goals because he was much bigger and taller than his opponents and team-mates, that's all."

Like many footballer parents, Giancarlo and Marina Inzaghi play a big part in their sons' lives. Giancarlo is heavily involved in managing their off-the-field affairs, while Marina divides her time between Turin and Rome as she attempts to look after her two bachelor boys.

"Pippo and Simone have very different natures. Pippo is much more determined and at the same time given to reflection, while Simone is more exuberant and playful," she says.

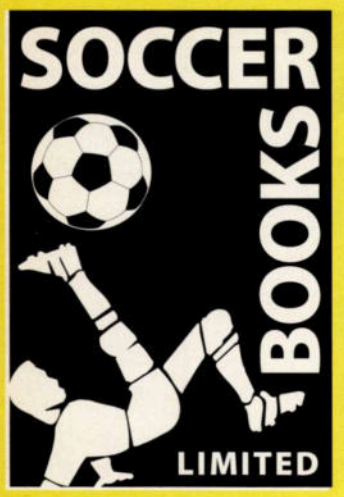
"Exuberant and playful" are probably not the two adjectives that first come to the minds of a number of Serie A and European defenders when assessing Simone. "Dangerous and tough" might seem more appropriate.

Simone, however, once again becomes playful when he is asked about this year's title tussle with big brother. "I'll tell you one thing: it looks like the title is going to stay in the family, and that's not bad now, is it?"

Paddy Agnew

Fact file

Club Lazio
Country Italy
Born April 5, 1976, in Piacenza
Previous clubs Piacenza, Carpi, Novara, Lumezzane, Piacenza, Brescello, Piacenza
International debut March 2000, v Spain
International caps 1 (0 goals)
Honours European Super Cup 1999



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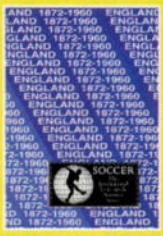

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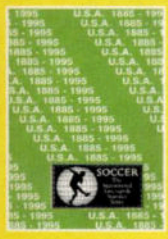

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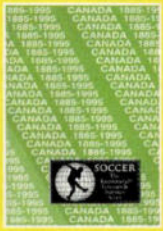

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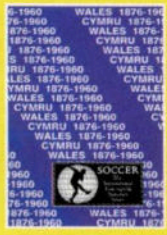

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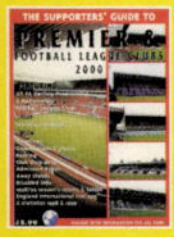

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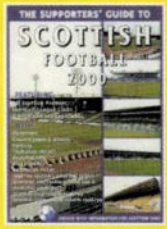

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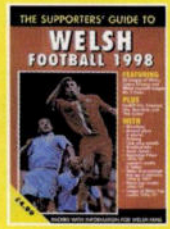

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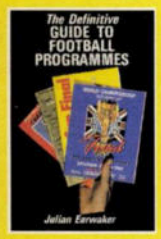

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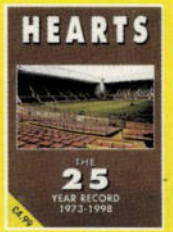

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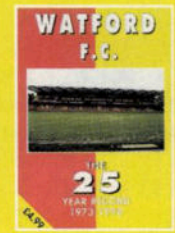

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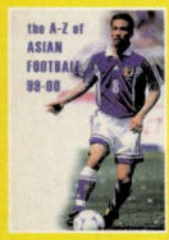

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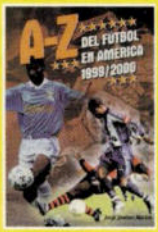

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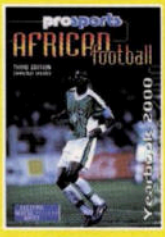

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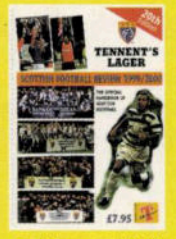

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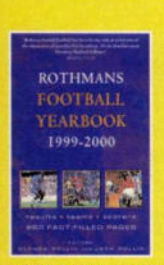

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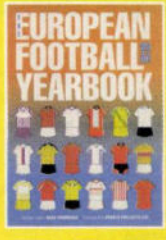

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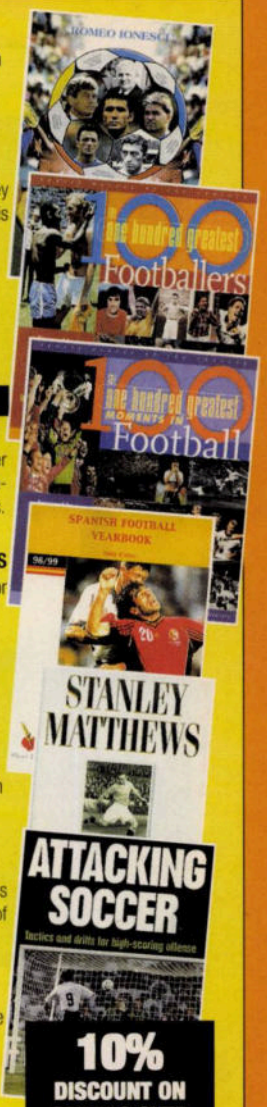

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Certainly Real Madrid appear out of it. A 1-1 draw away to Real Sociedad might not have been a bad result if it had happened early in the season, but the loss of two possible extra points left the 1998 European champions just too far off the pace.

The potentially decisive moments came on the mid-April weekend when Depor crushed Atletico Madrid 4-1, with a hat-trick from Holland striker Roy Makaay, while Barcelona and all their phalanx of Dutchmen collapsed 3-0 at home to Mallorca.

This was the second of three three-goal beatings in eight days for Barcelona: the previous Wednesday they had lost 3-1 to Chelsea in the Champions League quarter-final first leg, and the following Wednesday they slumped 3-0 away to Atletico Madrid in a Spanish Cup semi-final opener.

The League situation by then had

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Coruna five points clear with six games to play. As 19-goal Makaay said: "The League is not over by any means but the road is certainly a lot clearer. Losing key games against Chelsea and Mallorca in such a short space of time is a big blow for Barcelona – they are really wounded.

"I know we're talking different competitions, but when the fixture list is so congested it's difficult for players to change their mind-set."

Fran Gonzalez, the Depor skipper who is one of the survivors of their dramatic title failure in 1994 – when a last-minute penalty miss in their final match cost them the title – was equally mixed up.

He said: "What's happened now gives us a clear edge, but experience tells me it's better not to count your chickens. That's not being frightened – it's simply being sensible.

"If this crazy season has proved anything, it's that one week you can be laughing and the next the unexpected is waiting for you. We were much closer to winning in 1994 and look what happened then."

The inspiration for Mallorca's first win at Camp Nou was 19-year-old Cameroon midfielder Samuel Eto'o, on loan from Real Madrid since the transfer window. Eto'o said after his goals: "I hope they were watching in Madrid." He is likely to return to the capital this summer along with 15-goal team-mate Diego Tristan.

Barcelona's defeat prompted evidence that all is not well within the dressing-room. Both World Player of the Year Rivaldo and Patrick Kluivert were furious at being substituted midway through the second half and said so publicly the following day. Rivaldo insisted he had been trying his best, while Kluivert dared to question coach Van Gaal's tactical judgment by saying: "We were losing, so another attacker should have come on for a defender not for a forward."

Van Gaal reacted coolly in public, saying: "I would prefer it if Rivaldo and Kluivert would do their talking out on the pitch." Presumably he put his feelings into stronger words in private.

Not that they had much effect, judging by the Cup defeat away to Atletico. At least, Barcelona had some excuse – they were up against an Atletico side fired up by the return to power of president Jesus Gil. Two days earlier the game had been considered a virtual walkover, with Atletico in serious danger of relegation for the first time in 60 years and with the Cup nowhere in their priorities.

Then came the dramatic announcement that Gil, still facing fraud charges, was being reinstated as president, albeit with government watchdogs keeping control of day-to-day finances.

Suddenly the trickle of ticket sales turned into a flood and the players responded in style, led by yet another goal from the prolific Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink.

He scored his 23rd goal of the season in Atletico's League defeat at La Coruna, and may yet make history as the first player to top Spain's scoring charts and be relegated in the same season.

Powerful pursuers include Malaga's Brazilian, Catanha, with 22, Santander's Salva also on 22 (a penalty against Betis was his first goal since January), Depor's Makaay and Zaragoza's Yugoslavian centre-forward Savo Milosevic, both on 19.

Did you watch?...loan star Eto'o hopes Madrid switched on

Pro-file Gerard

Lazio destruction boosts value of Catalan cast-off

ONE of the most important players in Valencia's surprising Champions League progress is, ironically, a youngster cast out by the club two years ago. How times have changed for Gerard Lopez, reject turned hero and now on the shopping list of rich Italian clubs.

Born and brought up in Barcelona, he made his way through Barça's youth sides as a skilful but aggressive midfield all-rounder who showed great heading ability.

In 1996, aged 17, he was promoted to the B team and became an instant hit in the Second Division, scoring 10 goals in 32 matches despite playing just in front of the defence.

"It's so difficult to make the breakthrough at Barcelona," he recalls three years later. "So many of the kids I played with wasted too many years waiting for a chance that they were never given."

Gerard had caught the eye of coach Jorge Valdano, then trying to rebuild Valencia. "His offer was just too good to refuse," says Gerard. "It wasn't just money, but playing in the top division."

Unfortunately, Valdano was sacked after three matches of the new season and Gerard found his new environment hard.

In August 1998 he was loaned to Alaves, back in the top division after 42 years. He came out of his shell in Vitoria, became midfield anchorman and advanced to score seven times.

Valencia took Gerard back last summer and have been richly repaid. He quickly established himself in place of injured veteran Luis Milla and scored against Bayern Munich, Real Madrid and Barcelona. Gerard then scored the first League goal of 2000, against Celta Vigo, surprising the defence by hitting the area late with a trademark header.

In March he starred for the Spanish Under-20 side against Italy, but his finest hour came a week later, with a magnificent hat-trick in the 5-2 Champions League destruction of Lazio. His staggering display led to a veritable explosion of Italian interest in him, though Valencia president Pedro Cortes was quick to insist that Gerard was not for sale.

However, the Italians know that any player based in Spain can be captured simply by paying the 'buyout' clause in his contract, as required by Spanish law. Valencia have been reluctant to give the facts, but Gerard's buyout is believed to be 'only' around £5million.

"I'm really happy at Valencia" was his cautious answer when asked about a possible move. He did not rule out a lucrative summer switch, which could be ominous for Valencia, who have never held on to their stars. Claudio Lopez, for example, is bound for Lazio in July.

A wild-card appearance at the European Championship could increase Gerard's value. He has still to make his full international debut and coach Jose Antonio Camacho seems to have settled on his 22. But injury to one of the midfielders could open the door for the cast-off turned hero.

Duncan Shaw

Fact file

Club Valencia
Country Spain
Born March 12, 1979, in Barcelona
Previous clubs Barcelona B, Alaves

Bayern bounce back - Jeremies axed

Keir Radnedge on a dramatic month at club and international level

Full of criticism...Jens Jeremies spoke out against national coach Erich Ribbeck

BAYERN MUNICH regained the leadership in the Bundesliga as their football on the pitch proved a more positive influence than their verbal attacks on national coach Erich Ribbeck's European Championship preparations.

A 2-1 midweek win over Freiburg – amid stormy scenes – edged Bayern back ahead of Bayer Leverkusen on goal difference. Perhaps the need to concentrate on club demands, in both League and Champions League, will put a brake on the sniping which has been undermining Ribbeck's work.

Bayern skipper Stefan Effenberg will not play for the national team; Lothar Matthaus was publicly critical before his departure for MetroStars in New York; and their complaints and criticisms have been echoed by Jens Jeremies.

The midfielder's angle of attack was to compare the set-up at his club side with that of the national team. "At Bayern everyone knows his job out on the pitch; it's not the same with Germany," said Jeremies. "Everyone does his own thing. There's no teamwork. The 1-0 win over Norway [last November] fooled people into thinking things were better than they were.

"Holland could have beaten us by five," he added, referring to the countries' friendly in February. "It's

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no good trying to pretend otherwise. In fact, it might have been a good thing if we had lost 5-0 to Holland. Then people would have had to stop pretending."

Jeremies was also directly critical of Ribbeck. "We have a big squad with good players, so we should use them. The problem is, friendly matches do not really give you a proper test because of problems over player availability, injuries, and so on. But the manager is the one who has to bring it all together, and defence, midfield and attack now operate as separate units. There's no cohesion.

"The problem we have, going into Euro 2000, is the pressure created by so many poor performances. Many players do not play up to their potential for Germany. Then they start wondering whether they would be better off concentrating more on their club football."

Jeremies' attack earned him the axe from the friendly against Switzerland. Indeed, a panicky phone call from federation chief Egidius Braun was needed to prevent Jeremies from joining Effenberg in walking out on the national team altogether.

Bayern general manager Uli Hoeness is no fan of Ribbeck, either. Hoeness said: "Just consider what must be happening when Braun has to step in. That can only mean Ribbeck has lost control of the situation. I wish we had a coach who would get involved. We need people in charge who can keep young men under control."

By contrast Bayern president Franz Beckenbauer has said Ribbeck is "doing a good job". But then Beckenbauer has to play the diplomat because, in addition to his club work, he is the most high-profile vice-president of the DFB.

Back in the Bundesliga, Leverkusen's pursuit of a first League title appeared to be on course when two goals from Paulo Rink led them to a 3-1 win over Borussia Dortmund which kept them in top spot, two points clear of Bayern.

Relegation-threatened Dortmund, who had taken an early lead, played most of the second half with 10 men after the expulsion of Stefan Reuter.

At that stage Bayern were hanging on to Leverkusen's coat tails, thanks to a 4-0 win over Ulm in which Mehmet Scholl and Paulo Sergio (penalty) scored twice in a three-minute spell midway through the first half. Carsten Jancker and substitute Slawomir Wojciechowski scored the others.

On the following Wednesday, however, Bayern got their win in Freiburg, while Leverkusen were being held 1-1 away to Hansa Rostock. They also lost influential Brazilian Emerson with an ankle injury.

Bayern's match was painful for all concerned. Freiburg grabbed an 11th-minute lead through Levan Kobiaschwili, and Bayern were then reduced to 10 men when Sammy Kuffour was sent off for a tackle that would have looked more at home on a rugby pitch. This was Kuffour's fifth red card, and suspension means he is unlikely to play much part in Bayern's bid to retain the League crown.

Within a few minutes of Kuffour's dismissal, however, Jancker shot Bayern level and they secured all three points thanks to a controversial late penalty by Scholl. The decision infuriated Freiburg fans, who rained missiles down on Bayern goalkeeper Oliver Kahn. He was struck by a golf ball causing a gash that needed treatment, but he returned for the last 10 minutes and bravely withstood Freiburg's closing barrage. At the final whistle an angrily defiant Kahn had to be restrained by officials as he was escorted off, shouting at the crowd.

Effenberg was delighted with the turn of events on the night, saying: "This was just the boost we needed. Now I believe we're going to win all our five remaining games."

Leverkusen hardly looked like potential champions in Rostock, where they went a goal down just before half-time and were saved only by Bernd Schneider's equaliser after 66 minutes.

At the other end of the table, Eintracht Frankfurt improved their chances of escaping relegation with a 1-0 win over Werder Bremen, but doomed Duisburg hit rock bottom by losing 4-1 to 1860 in Munich.

On the transfer front, Leverkusen have agreed to buy Hamburg's penalty specialist goalkeeper Hans-Jorg Butt – he saves them and scores them – at the season's end, for £5million. By then Butt is expected to have been named as third-choice behind Kahn and Jens Lehmann (Borussia Dortmund) in Germany's squad for Euro 2000.

Thomas Hassler will not be there. He had fought back after two ankle fractures in the hope of adding to his 97 caps – the last of them won two years ago – but it is not to be.

Hassler, 1860 Munich's playmaker, said: "Erich Ribbeck called me to explain his decision, and I understand the situation. I would only have got a place on the bench if he had selected me, and he doesn't want to reduce me to the status of a mere reserve. I'm not sour at him – just terribly disappointed."

Pro-file Alexander Zickler

Long-time also-ran now in the running for Euro 2000

AFTER several years as the nearly man of the Bayern Munich attack, Alexander Zickler has suddenly sprung from the shadows to stake a claim for a spot in Germany's Euro 2000 squad.

Since joining Bayern from Dynamo Dresden in June 1993, Zickler's lot has invariably been to play second fiddle to a host of big-name front-runners, and it was the same story during the first half of this season.

Yet Zickler is anything but a quitter. He might have moved to Strasbourg last summer but instead chose to fight his corner at Bayern; now a new and improved Alex Zickler has emerged to finally break through the credibility barrier in Munich.

Indeed, he has turned out to be the surprise of the Bayern show in the post-winter break period, scoring eight goals in February and early March, including a brace in his team's 4-1 victory at home to Real Madrid in the Champions League.

For most of his Bayern career, Zickler has been an enigma, a forward of muscular power and rip-roaring speed but one prone to let himself down by snatching at chances or rushing, head down, into blind alleys. Now, though, the lessons seem to have been learnt.

"In the past I've lacked composure in front of goal," the 26-year-old admits. "I just didn't have that killer instinct which all great strikers have. Because of my speed, I'm at my best when counter-attacking from deep positions, but it was obvious that I also had to improve my goalscoring record for Bayern [before this season he had scored 36 goals in 150 Bundesliga games for the club]. I've worked tremendously hard on my finishing in training and I'm beginning to see the results. I'm much more in control of myself when it comes to the job of putting the ball in the net. I have a lot more poise and self-confidence than I used to. That's made all the difference."

How times have changed for Zickler. As recently as February 1999, he was heavily criticised for a poor performance in Germany's 3-0 loss against the United States in Jacksonville – though, in mitigation, he was used in an unfamiliar role on the left side of midfield.

Following that ill-fated trip he was cast aside by national coach Erich Ribbeck. But a little more than a year later, he finds himself presented in the media as a would-be saviour of an ailing *Nationalmannschaft* in urgent need of fresh blood and ideas.

With Germany's main striker, Oliver Bierhoff, out of form at Milan, Ribbeck will need all the valid front-line alternatives he can muster at Euro 2000, and a rejuvenated Alex Zickler certainly fits the bill.

Nick Bidwell

Fact file

Club Bayern Munich
Country Germany
Born February 28, 1974, in Dresden
Previous club Dynamo Dresden
International debut November 1998, v Holland
International caps 3 (0 goals)
Honours UEFA Cup 1996 (Bayern Munich); German League 1994, 1997, 1999 (Bayern Munich); German Cup 1998 (Bayern Munich)

Red mist...Marcelo Gallardo has paid the price for a tunnel fight

Bust-up costs Marseille dear

Andre Duclos on a volatile top-flight encounter

MARSEILLE'S troubled season took a turn for the worse when they were fined £50,000 and had assistant coach Christophe Galtier suspended for six months after a stormy encounter with Monaco.

The result, a 4-2 win for Marseille, was overshadowed by a number of unsavoury incidents, including a fight involving Galtier and Monaco's Argentinian midfielder Marcelo Gallardo in the tunnel at half-time.

Both were sent off after the clash, and their dismissals followed those of Monaco's Philippe Leonard (for insulting the referee) and Marseille's Ivan De la Pena (elbowing an opponent).

Marseille's fine was the heaviest imposed by the French League's disciplinary committee, but at least the win eased their relegation worries. It also put Monaco's championship celebrations on hold, but a week later a point from their match against Nantes was enough to ensure a seventh League title.

Former Monaco coach Jean Tigana has taken on a surprising new challenge – accepting the post of manager at English First Division Fulham. Meanwhile, there is a strong chance that Luis Fernandez, a team-mate of Tigana in the brilliant France team of the mid-1980s, will return to run Paris Saint-Germain where he was once so successful.

After more than four years in the Basque country with Athletic Bilbao he is giving up at the end of this season, though his contract still has a year to run. He gives various reasons. One is that players such as Urzaiz, the centre forward he re-motivated and turned into a Spanish international, and the local hero, midfielder Guerrero, have lacked motivation of late. Second, that there has been a degree of unrest in both team and club. Third, that it grows harder and harder to adhere to the brave club policy of using only Basque players. Fourth, that in 2001 the Athletic president is up for re-election and Fernandez doesn't want to be the cause, through inadequate results, of his defenestration.

Fernandez says he might take time off, might even go into general management, but the feeling is that he is not yet ready to kick himself upstairs and will find another club, perhaps in Spain or back in France. Or even, were things to go wrong for France at Euro 2000, as manager of the national team.

Tigana nearly got that job. Instead, since leaving Monaco, where he did so well for so long, he relapsed into relative inactivity. He is said to be getting a cool £7million as the new manager of Fulham, but is it the ideal job? After all, he has been used to managing top teams in

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France, with serious ambitions. At Fulham, he takes over a job lot of expensive players who are struggling even to reach the play-offs.

The owner, Mohamed Fayed, seems to have bottomless pockets but you cannot help wondering whether all that money would be better spent acquiring new players rather than a manager who might find it hard to adjust to such a different soccer scene.

Paris Saint-Germain, who have had their usual run in the League Cup, and fervently hope to gain a place in next season's Champions League, did well during the winter break to pick up the Moroccan international defender Tala El Karkouri, who played for Raja Casablanca in the World Club Championship in Brazil.

El Karkouri is a supremely confident footballer. Although he is only 23 and having his first experience of French football, he is already giving orders to the rest of his defence, saying that he takes his own orders from his goalkeeper!

PSG, he feels, have improved this year in terms of their commitment, although this is not always apparent; there are times when they regard a match as too easy – not a charge that will ever be levelled at the young Moroccan.

Lens forward Pascal Nouma, now 28, used to play for PSG, spending his first six professional years with them, between 1986 and 1992, and having another spell there in the mid-1990s. But Arsenal will surely long remember the swinging shot that banged against the bar at Highbury during Lens' brave performance in the UEFA Cup semi-final first leg.

Who would have given Lens a chance after they had so feebly conceded that second-minute goal to Dennis Bergkamp, when he went through two defenders and then outflanked the rash rush of keeper Guillaume Warmuz? Strange team, Lens, so resilient in the UEFA Cup yet so prone to disappoint as soon as they've been brought back to the bread and butter of domestic soccer.

After the impressive UEFA Cup quarter-final victory over Celta Vigo, Nouma admits that he wept. He pays tribute to Warmuz for the advice which, he says, has improved his game since joining the club in 1998. "In Guillaume," says Nouma, "I found someone who can understand me, someone with whom I can talk." Warmuz, for his part, told Nouma: "I knew you were going to come and see me some time or another."

"You cannot be loved by everybody," says Nouma resignedly, knowing he has the reputation of being a difficult customer. "Even Jesus Christ isn't! I know who I am. I wouldn't change." You can call him a bad boy, he says but he is only that when somebody upsets him.

Playing for Strasbourg at Lens, he hardly endeared himself to their fans by pulling down his shorts to insult them. Initially at Lens he thought the supporters might be right to dislike him but in due course he'd show them! Which effectively he has, although making up for the loss of a regular goalscorer such as Tony Vairelles, sold last summer, has not been easy.

Nouma, a Parisian who joined PSG as a 14-year-old, says his bad memories are chiefly of his time with Lille, where he never wanted to go. "I was 19 and I had never left home," he said. "They told me, 'Sign here, and tomorrow you go.' I hated it." But he is clearly happy enough with that other northern club, Lens.

Tricky customer...Lens' Pascal Nouma takes on Arsenal's defence

Pro-file Ludovic Giuly

Monaco's emerging star in the Giresse mould

TO SAY that little Monaco midfielder Ludovic Giuly was taken by surprise when called up for France's recent friendly in Scotland is one of the understatements of the year.

After all, as recently as February, Giuly seemed to have burnt his international bridges, succumbing to a fit of pique on hearing that he had not been included in the squad for the home game against Poland, and publicly criticising national coach Roger Lemerre.

Gallic football writers love to point out Lemerre's faults, his alleged lack of authority and failure to communicate. Harbouring grudges, however, is not one of them, and he had no qualms about overlooking Giuly's diatribe and offering the 23-year-old his first cap in a 2-0 win at Hampden Park.

"Frankly, the last thing I was expecting was to be picked against Scotland," Giuly admits. "I've had a good season with Monaco but I thought the door to the national team was closed to me. I wasn't trying to be mischievous with my recent declarations in the press. It was just me expressing my disappointment at being left out.

"I've been picked because of my work with Monaco over the past six months and, of course, my cause has been helped enormously by our domination of the French championship this season. Roger Lemerre thinks I can be useful to the France side and now it's up to me to show that he hasn't made a mistake."

Not that the France coach should have cause to regret his forgive-and-forget approach. Giuly, whose build and talent is in the mould of Alain Giresse, one of the great French midfielders, has long been regarded as the most creative player of his generation. Since moving from hometown club, Lyon, to Monaco for £4.2million in January 1998, his already well-stocked bag of tricks has been supplemented by greater consistency and less individualism.

"Giuly has looked international class for a long while," says former Monaco and France centre-forward Eric Pecout. "Even as a raw teenager with Lyon he was at the heart of all their best attacking movements. He buzzed everywhere and was so direct and adventurous. It was obvious he was an outstanding prospect."

At Lyon he was impressive playing just behind the strikers, but Monaco coach Claude Puel prefers him on the right of midfield, where his dynamism and ball skills seem to be even more effective. If Monaco have been the team of the season in France, if David Trezeguet and Marco Simone have scored so many goals, it's very much because of the great service from the flanks from Giuly and Marcelo Gallardo.

Nick Bidwell

Fact file

Club Monaco
Country France
Born July 10, 1976, in Lyon
Previous club Lyon
International debut March 2000, v Scotland
International caps 1 (0 goals)
Honours French League 2000

No contest

Gavin Hamilton on Manchester United's stroll to yet another title

Seven up...Ole Gunnar Solskjaer scores Manchester United's final goal in the rout of West Ham at Old Trafford

MANCHESTER UNITED have romped unchallenged to a sixth League title in eight years. The championship is now a mere formality and a record points total a distinct possibility.

Comfortable wins over Derby, Leicester and Bradford City were followed by a stonking 7-1 hiding meted out to West Ham at Old Trafford. A thrilling 4-3 win at Middlesbrough and a stylish 4-0 rout of Sunderland left Alex Ferguson and his men in an unassailable position at the top of the table, and free to concentrate on defending their European crown.

The much-criticised (and ultimately unsuccessful) trip to the World Club Championship in January, far from inhibiting United's progress, appears to have been just the tonic they needed to maintain an impressive winning streak. If anything, the Old Trafford team look a better side this season than last, give or take a few goalkeeping errors.

United have struggled to replace Peter Schmeichel and Ferguson is likely to make the purchase of a new keeper his top priority ahead of next season. Neil Sullivan (Wimbledon) and Jens Lehmann (Borussia Dortmund) have been mentioned as targets. PSV striker Ruud Van Nistelrooy could also be heading to Old Trafford, but United will be keen to avoid an auction situation with Arsenal for the Dutchman.

United's total control of the domestic title race has left the challengers back in the pack fighting for scraps from the champions' table. Liverpool, showing renewed willpower and strength of purpose under Gerard Houllier's guidance, look to have secured second place and a spot in next season's Champions League – their first appearance in the European Champions Cup since the Heysel disaster in 1985.

Below them, Leeds suffered a thoroughly miserable month. The fatal stabbing of two fans in Istanbul before the UEFA Cup semi-final first leg against Galatasaray appears to have had a profoundly negative effect on their season.

In Leeds' first match at home since the tragedy, they faced an Arsenal side who were still very much in contention for the third Champions League place.

The result, an emphatic 4-0 win for Arsenal, came after Leeds lost Ian Harte, sent off in the first half for kicking out at Dennis Bergkamp. So Arsenal moved ahead of Leeds into third place.

This was a desperately disappointing result for Leeds, who have played some exhilarating football this season. But clearly the events in Istanbul took their toll on a very young side.

Manager David O'Leary was honest about his side's plight: "We've had a lot of plaudits this season but now we're looking at the other side. The kids are making stupid mistakes."

At the other end of the table, Watford and Bradford look doomed, but Sheffield Wednesday were offered a glimmer of hope after wins over Wimbledon and Chelsea.

Wimbledon, and their Norwegian coach Egil Olsen, look vulnerable. They were five points better off than Wednesday with five matches to play, but facing a harder run-in. Perhaps symbolically, former owner Sam Hammam has relinquished all his remaining shares in the club. Thus little of the spirit of the Crazy Gang remains.

Across South London, Charlton are preparing for a return to the top division after only one season away. Manager Alan Curbishley persuaded their best players, notably midfielder Mark Kinsella, to stay after last summer's relegation. They are now reaping the rewards.

Newcastle's hopes of a third successive FA Cup Final were ended after they went down 2-1 to Chelsea at Wembley. Gustavo Poyet scored one in each half for the Blues, with Rob Lee heading an equaliser midway through the second half.

In the other semi-final, also at Wembley, Bolton held Aston Villa to a 0-0 draw after extra time. But in the penalty shoot-out Villa keeper David James saved twice to put his team through.

Comeback...Sebastian Rozental

SCOTLAND

Rozental returns

RANGERS, having sewn up the League title well in advance of the closing stages, powered into the Scottish Cup Final with a 7-0 demolition of Ayr United.

They will meet Aberdeen, who gained some consolation for losing the League Cup Final 2-0 to Celtic by beating Hibs 2-1 to reach their second tournament decider of the season.

Rangers' semi-final proved another milestone in Chilean striker Sebastian Rozental's comeback. He arrived at Ibrox more than two years ago but played only 20 competitive minutes before being carried off with a knee injury which appeared to have ended his career.

Rangers and Rozental persevered, however, and after some protracted treatment, their patience was rewarded with his return to the first team after the winter break just gone.

Although perhaps not yet 100 per cent fit, he has displayed sufficient skill and resolve to suggest that he is ready to make up for lost time.

Meanwhile, Rangers chairman David Murray has announced details of a major capital injection, in the region of £100million, designed to at last establish the club at European level. Despite ongoing domestic domination, they consistently fall short of the standards required for success in Europe, and are now so far detached from the rest of Scottish football that progress to a higher plane is deemed essential.

Celtic continue to seek a long-term replacement for ill-fated manager John Barnes. Kenny Dalglish took over in a caretaker capacity following Barnes's dismissal but has displayed no great enthusiasm for taking charge on a permanent basis.

Many critics have accused the club's record signing, Eyal Berkovic, of showing insufficient passion, and he was dropped for the League Cup Final and two Old Firm games. However, the Israeli international maintains that he wants to stay with Celtic, for the time being at least.

There is also much speculation about the future of the club's Australian striker, Mark Viduka, with Bayern Munich believed to be the latest club to have expressed interest.

Alan Fairley

WALES

TNS take Barry to the wire

IN THE most thrilling title race since 1994, when Bangor City won the title on the last day of the season, Barry Town and Total Network Solutions are set to battle it out to the bitter end.

With four games left, champions Barry were one point ahead of TNS. However, they have been badly hit by injury, so much so that when they visited Caernarfon Town, striker Paul Evans had to play in goal.

In the Cup semi-finals, Cwmbran surprisingly beat Barry 4-2 on penalties, with Bangor City defeating Afan Lido 4-2.

Wales lost 2-1 to Finland in front of a record 66,500 crowd in Cardiff's new Millennium stadium. This figure is likely be surpassed when the national team take on Brazil in May.

Mel Thomas

N. IRELAND

Linfield lose but still win title

AS EXPECTED Linfield wrapped up the League title with five matches to spare, although they perhaps would have wished for a slightly more glorious decider.

They travelled to Coleraine knowing that a draw would be enough to give them their first championship in six years. However, they lost 2-1.

Fortunately for them, second-placed Glentoran, the outgoing champions, lost to a late goal against bottom club Lisburn Distillery, to hand the trophy to their rivals.

Sammy McIlroy won his second game in charge of the national team when David Healy, James Quinn and Michael Hughes (penalty) scored in a 3-0 victory away to Malta.

Roy Kitson

Pro-file Steven Gerrard

Newcomer figuring high on Keegan's list

LAST summer, many people questioned the judgment of Liverpool's French manager, Gerard Houllier, when he recruited a host of foreign players, mostly unknown and untested. It was an Anfield revolution too far, they said.

The new arrivals from Europe – including Sami Hyypia, Sander Westerveld, Dietmar Hamann and Titi Camara – have silenced the doubters as Liverpool have challenged for a place in next season's Champions League. But much of the club's success can be put down to homegrown talent, which many critics claimed would be excluded from Anfield by the foreign signings.

Nobody has made more of an impact than Steven Gerrard. The Liverpool-born youngster made a handful of substitute appearances last season and had been expected to bide his time again. But injuries to the likes of Hamann and Jamie Redknapp gave Gerrard an opportunity that he has taken with relish.

His performances at right-back and in midfield – combative and committed but demonstrating a maturity on the ball way beyond his years – are reminiscent of former Liverpool midfielder Ronnie Whelan.

Gerrard cites Whelan as his boyhood idol. "I often used to watch him play," he says. "He made the game look easy. He was often the unsung hero in the Liverpool midfield. He did so much work and he really should have got more recognition for his efforts."

In contrast, Gerrard's contribution has already been recognised with a full international call-up after scoring on his Under-21 debut. Injury prevented him playing against Argentina in February, but England coach Kevin Keegan seems certain to include him in his squad for Euro 2000.

"I can't speak highly enough of him," Keegan said after watching Gerrard star for England Under-21s against Yugoslavia in Barcelona. "I don't like to pick out individuals but his tackling, commitment, use of the ball and all-round game stood out. I have watched him play for Liverpool five times, which is probably more than any other player. Every time I have seen him he has impressed me.

"Steven is 19 going on 30. He has an awful lot going for him. He's a tremendously exciting prospect.

Gerrard's versatility is a big plus for Keegan, who needs a combative midfielder to replace the injured David Batty.

"He can play equally well in different positions," says Keegan. "His range of passing and ability to spot situations early are excellent.

"It's very unusual to see so young and inexperienced a player who can execute the midfield holding role so competently."

Gavin Hamilton

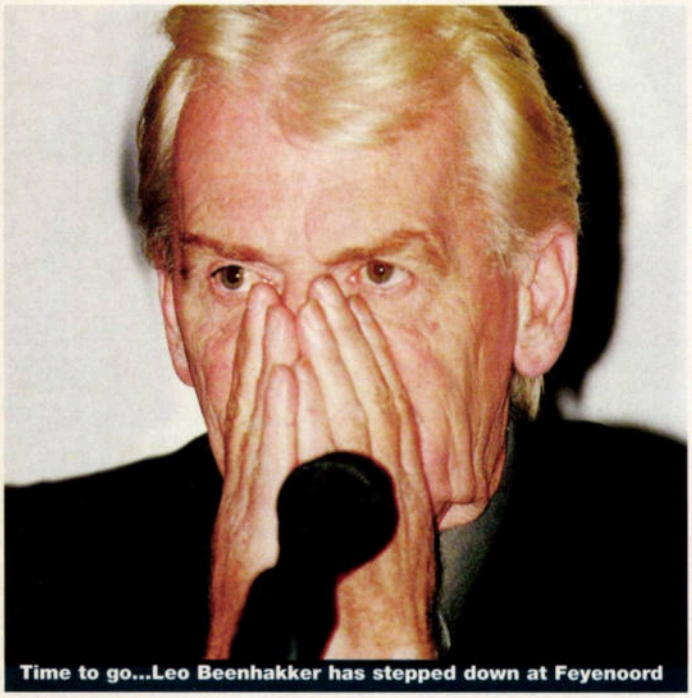
Fact file

Club Liverpool
Country England
Born May 30, 1980, in Whiston
Previous clubs None
Honours None

Beenhakker bows out

HOLLAND

Klaas-Jan Droppert reports on the end of a distinguished coaching career



Time to go...Leo Beenhakker has stepped down at Feyenoord

FIVE matches before Leo Beenhakker was due to finish his long coaching career, he decided to resign from his post at Feyenoord. "I haven't seen any progression lately, and I have to take my responsibility," he said, alluding to the weeks after the club's elimination from the Champions League.

Since the decider in Marseille, the bond between coach and players has disappeared. Internal conflicts and lack of motivation led to some bad results, and Beenhakker could not improve them. Youth coach Henk Van Stee is now in charge, but Fortuna's Bert Van Marwijk will take over next season.

This was a sad end to a coaching career that lasted 35 years and took Beenhakker all around the globe. His successes included winning domestic titles with Ajax (twice) and Real Madrid (four times).

At Ajax, Co Adriaanse, who had great success in the past as youth coach at the club, has been appointed coach from next season in succession to Jan Wouters, who was fired last month.

PSV will clinch the League title unchallenged, with Ajax, Feyenoord, Heerenveen and Twente battling for the two other Champions League spots. Twente recently equalled their club record of 15 consecutive matches without defeat, set in 1968. Fred Rutten, a former player, took over as head coach last year, and deserves much of the credit for the record run.

The national Cup Final will be between NEC and Roda JC. In the semis, NEC beat AZ on penalties, and Davy Zafarin scored Roda's golden goal against Vitesse.

The national team earned yet another draw, 2-2, against Euro 2000 co-hosts Belgium. Feyenoord's Paul Bosvelt made his debut in the game, in which Belgium took the Dutch by surprise by playing in a 3-5-2 formation. Patrick Kluivert scored both goals for Holland.

Punished...Murat Yakin

SWITZERLAND

'Terrified' Yakin hit by record fine

SWISS international Murat Yakin has been fined £143,000 – the highest fine ever imposed by FIFA on an individual player – for breaking his contract with Fenerbahce.

The midfielder, now playing for Basle with FIFA permission until he joins Kaiserslautern in July, was under contract with the Turkish club until June, but left the country after last year's earthquakes. He claimed that he took the decision because he was terrified of further tremors. The fine represents compensation of two months' salary to Fenerbahce and one month to victims of the earthquakes.

League leaders St Gallen increased their unbeaten run to 15 games with a 1-1 draw against Basle and their lead over nearest challengers Grasshopper to eight points.

Grasshopper were held to a 1-1 draw at home to Lausanne and their title hopes were further diminished by the news that a thigh injury is likely to keep forward Stephane Chapuisat out of action for the rest of the season.

Lucerne, weakened by injuries, went down 7-1 to St Gallen and 6-0 to Servette in successive weeks. The latter match was a traumatic experience for last season's most promising newcomer, keeper Paulo Collaviti, 20, who was making his full top-flight debut after joining Lucerne on loan from Second Division Young Boys.

Swiss football was struck by tragedy when Aarau's 21-year-old goalkeeper, Dino Roselli, was fatally injured in a car crash.

Ivar von Rulach

● In **LIECHTENSTEIN**, FC Vaduz and Red Star Zurich both had 35 points with eight games to go, *writes Graeme Crawford*, and whichever team triumphs will take part in the Swiss National Liga B next season.

Vaduz, who lead on goal difference, missed a chance to go clear when losing 1-0 to SV Schaffhausen.

PORTUGAL

Sporting edge ahead

PORTO's 1-0 defeat away to Benfica allowed Sporting Lisbon to increase their lead at the top of the table to four points and give them a realistic hope of winning their first League title since 1982.

A 1-0 home victory over Belenenses the following day put Sporting on to 64 points, with Porto on 60. However, the following week the Lisbon club allowed the champions to narrow the gap to just two points when they could only draw 1-1 at Uniao Leiria.

Two days later, Porto beat Salgueiros 2-0 at home, the second coming from Mario Jardel. That put the Brazilian on 31 goals for the season, 13 clear of his nearest rival in the scoring charts.

The same weekend, Benfica won 4-2 away to Campomaiorense to leave them just five points off the top and with an outside chance of taking the title.

After 29 rounds only six points separated the bottom six clubs – Farense, Rio Ave, Vitoria Setubal, Salgueiros, Campomaiorense and Santa Clara – with the last three in the relegation zone.

Alberto da Silva

REP IRELAND

Keely completes treble

SHELBOURNE romped to their first championship since 1992, thanks largely to manager Dermot Keely. He has now won the title with three clubs, Shamrock Rovers and Dundalk being the others.

"A lot of managers have left Tolka Park without a League title to their name," said Keely. "It's nice to be in this position and it gives me a lot of satisfaction."

Only Dublin rivals Bohemians now stand between Shelbourne and

their first League-Cup double. They meet in the FAI Harp Lager Cup Final at Tolka Park on April 30.

Bohemians should finish second in the League, with St Patrick's, Cork City and Shamrock Rovers competing for the other Euro places. At the other end, Sligo Rovers and Drogheda United seem sure to be relegated.

Sean Creedon

BELGIUM

Anderlecht again hit by Westerlo jinx

A DAY of high expectations for Anderlecht ended in ignominy on the pitch and acrimony off it.

They needed to win at Westerlo to ensure that they won the League title, but crashed to a 5-0 defeat. This was too much of an indignity for some of Anderlecht's less tolerant supporters and at 4-0 down a pitch invasion caused the game to be held up for 17 minutes.

"We came here for a party and it turned into a nightmare," said Anderlecht chairman Roger Vanden Stock after order had been restored.

Westerlo were helped by the fourth-minute dismissal of visiting midfielder Didier Dheedene for bringing down Toni Brogno, who got up to slot away the ensuing penalty. He then added another goal, taking him to 23 for the season – only three behind Gent's Ole-Martin Arst.

The result, equalling the third worst defeat in Anderlecht's 92-year history, was at least a slight improvement on last season's 6-0 crash, which left the club at the foot of the table and coach Arie Haan out of work.

Par Zetterberg was among the crestfallen Anderlecht team this time around and may well be wishing that he had not made such a swift recovery from a diabetic collapse four days before the game. The midfielder had been driving along a motorway when, close to passing out, he was forced to pull in and was helped by a passing fireman.

Anderlecht remain virtually assured of the title, despite the heavy defeat, and have been helped by the lack of consistency of their leading rivals. Club Brugge's bad spell coincided with the ludicrous uncertainty concerning coach Rene Verheyen's role, while Standard Liege have fallen away badly.

Struggling Charleroi will have the first player/president in Belgian history now that Enzo Scifo has revealed his intention to carry on playing for at least another season.

Nicholas Harling

● A NEW League format is to be adopted in **LUXEMBOURG**, *writes Tim Brice*, with the four best-supported clubs playing each other home and away to find the champions. The four going into the first such event are Grevenmacher, Avenir Beggen, Jeunesse and F91 Dudelange.

FC Muhlenbach, who have a reputation as giantkillers, lost 6-0 to Sporting Mertzig in the Cup. In the other quarter-finals, Grevenmacher edged out Young Boys Diekirch 1-0, Jeunesse beat Spora Luxembourg by the same score, and Mondercange defeated Rodange 2-1.

Tim Brice

Collapsed...Par Zetterberg had a close call on the motorway

Club Focus Sporting Lisbon

Inacio inspires the Lions to roar once more

DESPITE all attempts by Sporting Lisbon's management to keep a lid on the atmosphere of euphoria enveloping their club, nothing it seems can stifle the feeling among their fans that they are about to scoop their first Portuguese championship since 1982.

Young promise...Beto

For the past 18 years, all connected with Sporting, nicknamed the Lions, have been force-fed a diet of false dawns and under-achievement. Not this season.

Sporting have improved steadily throughout 1999-2000, and after spending several months on the shoulder of FC Porto, the Lions finally leapfrogged into top spot in mid-March – thanks to a 2-0 home win over the League leaders.

Yet back in September, there was no talk of potential title wins. Indeed, after a number of poor League performances and a 3-0 defeat away to Viking Stavanger in the first round of the UEFA Cup, crisis was very much in the air. Sporting's recently installed Italian coach Giuseppe Materazzi was public enemy number one, police had to protect senior club officials from irate fans following a home draw with Estrela Amadora, and president Jose Roquette briefly resigned.

Materazzi was fired in late September after only eight weeks, and though the likes of Javier Clemente, Guus Hiddink and Antonio Oliveira were all linked with the job, it was instead offered on a temporary basis to Augusto Inacio. The former Portugal and Porto full-back, who had gone on to serve as an assistant coach at that club and later been in charge at Maritimo and Chaves, had been working as a football pundit on TV at the time of his appointment. And he quickly began to win the Sporting ratings war, successfully shoring up an uncertain back-line and instilling greater fighting spirit and togetherness within the team. In Inacio's first six months in charge, the Lions lost only two out of 22 League games and his just reward was a permanent contract.

The team comprises a number of classy individuals. Danish keeper Peter Schmeichel remains as influential as ever following his move from Manchester United last summer; the excellence of full-back Rui Jorge and defensive midfielder Vidigal has put them in contention for Portugal's Euro 2000 squad; skipper Pedro Barbosa has been his usual creative self in midfield; and the Argentinian forward Alberto Acosta has confounded all those who claimed in pre-season that Sporting lacked a genuine marksman by scoring 20 times by early April.

Young guns such as centre-back Beto, plus the dynamic midfield duo of Portuguese Under-21 linchpin Delfim and Argentinian starlet Aldo Duscher, have made major contributions too, as have the trio of mid-season signings: Brazilian libero Andre Cruz (Torino), his compatriot and fellow defender Cesar Prates (Real Madrid) and Belgian international attacker Mbo M'Penza (Standard Liege).

The club's long title drought and the huge expectations of their fans is thought to make the job of coaching Sporting the toughest in Portuguese football. It has proved otherwise with Inacio.

Nick Bidwell

Rosenborg strengthen grip

NORWAY

Sigurd Odegaard on the start of a new season

Signed up...Orjan Berg secured a permanent move to Rosenborg

THE National League kicked off in early April and there is an exciting season in prospect, even though 20 players have moved abroad since last autumn.

Rosenborg have lost Sigurd Rushfeldt, Totto Dahlum, Runar Berg and Mini Jacobsen, but they are still favourites to win a ninth successive title. Despite a mediocre second stage in the Champions League, they look even stronger than last season.

Rosenborg started their campaign with a 2-0 victory away to Stabaek, and captain Erik Hoftun was back at his best, scoring one of the goals.

The club have meanwhile secured the services of Orjan Berg, who had returned to Bodo/Glimt having been on loan to Rosenborg until they were knocked out of the Champions League.

Berg simply could not resist the challenge of continuing his career with Rosenborg, and persuaded Bodo to release him. The champions came up with an offer of about £600,000, plus young central defender Christian Steen, to clinch the deal.

Bodo coach Dag Opjordsmoen was fuming as he saw his key midfielder depart just days before the start of the season.

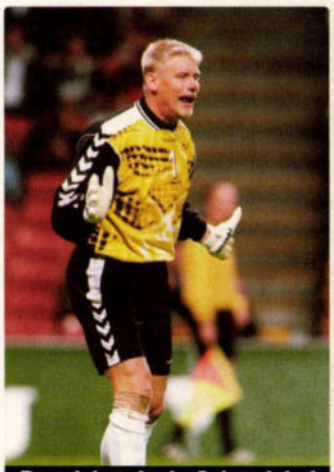
John Carew, the Rosenborg striker whose lack of goals cost his club the chance to progress further in the Champions League, finally signed for Valencia, for £6.5million.

Carew's replacement is Rune Lange, signed from Tromso.

Brann Bergen have lost Cato Guntveit (Aberdeen) and Jan Ove Pedersen (Bregenz) since last season but new coach Teitur Thordarson has added exciting players to his squad. Hassan El-Fakiri, who joined for free from Lyn Oslo under the Bosman ruling and will move to Monaco in the summer, had an outstanding game in Brann's 4-1 defeat of Viking Stavanger on the opening day.

Molde have lost several players but added Roger Nilsen (from English and Austrian football), Clayton Zane (Australia) and Fredrik Kjolner (Valerenga) to their squad.

Valerenga won 4-1 against Tromso, with one of the goals coming from new signing Kjetil Rekdal.



Promising deal...Schmeichel

DENMARK

Schmeichel goes for United talent

PETER SCHMEICHEL has agreed a deal with Manchester United which will allow Hvidovre, the small Danish club he owns, to borrow players from the European champions.

The veteran goalkeeper bought his boyhood club a few months ago, installed former international Jan Sorensen as manager, and has seen the First Division team stabilise in mid-table.

Now Schmeichel has come to an agreement with his old boss, Sir Alex Ferguson, to borrow up to three of United's brightest young talents each season.

Two of Schmeichel's colleagues from the 1992 European Championship-winning side are doing well as coaches.

John Jensen looks good for the title in his first season as a boss, with his club, Herfolge, six points clear after 23 rounds despite two defeats at the start of the spring campaign.

One of these setbacks was at home against Brondby in front of a 7,000 crowd – 2,000 more than the population of the village.

Herfolge have been aided by a lack of consistency shown by the chasing pack – Silkeborg, Brondby, AB and Lyngby, all on 37 points.

The other hero of 1992 making his mark as a coach is former Aston Villa defender Kent Nielsen, jointly in charge of AGF with Lars Lundkvist.

Nielsen's first game in charge, a vital 1-0 victory over Viborg, took his club out of the relegation zone.

Off the field, AGF have been involved in a bizarre battle with Silkeborg over a proposed change of

name. Silkeborg want to widen their appeal and rename themselves either FC Jylland, FC East-Jylland or Football Club Jutland, using the English name for the peninsula above Germany.

AGF, based in the eastern Jutland city of Aarhus, objected to all three names. Their contention is that if any club has been synonymous with Jutland over the years, it is them.

Jim Holden

SWEDEN

Injury setbacks hit finals preparations

WINDS of doubt are blowing around Sweden's camp as the Euro 2000 finals approach. A growing list of injuries has left co-managers Tommy Soderberg and Lars Lagerback unable to test their strongest side.

The 1-1 draw with Austria proved costly because midfielder Stefan Schwarz damaged an Achilles tendon and is out for at least six months.

Schwarz, the Swedish Player of the Year, will be badly missed this summer, and with forward Henrik Larsson also doubtful, Sweden look like being without two of their best players.

The team hardly excelled against Austria, one of the few bright spots being the goal, scored by Kaiserslautern's Jorgen Pettersson – his first in national colours since August 1998.

AIK went into the new season as clear favourites to take the title, with Tom Prahl's entertaining Halmstads expected to be their strongest challengers. Both sides won away in the opening round, to Elfsborg and Trelleborgs respectively, while there were also wins for Sundsvall, Orgryte and IFK Gothenburg.

The last two named are part of what is now a five-strong contingent of top-flight Gothenburg clubs, along with Vastra Frolunda and promoted GAIS and Hacken. Only six of the 26 rounds will not feature a city derby.

Pentti Hietanen

FINLAND

Kolkka delivers

THE national team recorded their first win on British soil when beating Wales 2-1 in Cardiff.

The Finnish star was PSV's Joonas Kolkka, who created both his side's goals and hit a post. Kolkka was often ignored by Finland's previous coach, Richard Moller Nielsen, but new boss Antti Muurinen seems to have more faith in him.

However, just as Kolkka faded in the second half, so did Finland. Play was reduced to a mere rearguard action with desperate long clearances out of defence – just the kind of football that Muurinen hates.

"We must improve our distribution and hold the ball more," he said. "That is not only a question of skill, but also of attitude."

Big striker Mika Kottila has moved from Brann Bergen in Norway to Trelleborgs of Sweden.

Champions FC Haka's Russian forward Valery Popovitch will return to the club after a loan spell in Holland, with Heerenveen.

Pentti Hietanen

Justified selection...Kolkka

ICELAND

Women fight back after heavy defeat

AFTER well-publicised disputes off the park, Iceland's women showed what they could do on it in two friendlies against the United States.

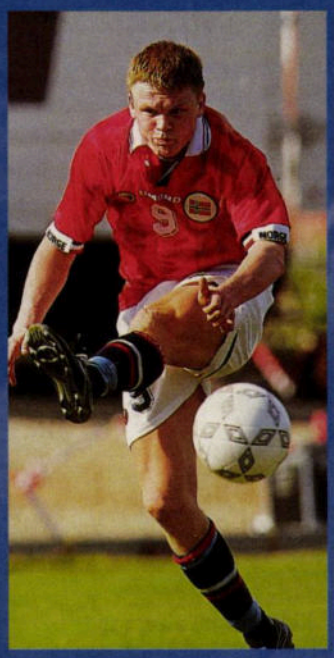
New coach Logi Olafsson's much-changed side were thrashed 8-0 in their first meeting with the world champions, but three days later turned in a fighting performance to gain a 0-0 draw before a crowd of more than 10,000.

Leicester midfielder Arnar Gunnlaugsson was fined £15,000 and banned from receiving tickets to major cup and international matches for five years after being found guilty of illegally selling tickets for last year's League Cup Final. Gunnlaugsson, on loan at Stoke, was one of seven Leicester players and officials punished for their part in the affair.

Rab Christie

Pro-file John Arne Riise

Norwegian youngster shining for Monaco



THIS season has seen across-the-board success for Norwegian midfield revelation John Arne Riise. Not content with excelling in midfield for French champions Monaco and deservedly breaking into the Norwegian national team set-up, 19-year-old Riise was also voted the most popular player at his club by female supporters.

Few experts foresaw his rapid rise to stardom. When Riise left Second Division Aalesund for Monaco in summer 1998, the consensus was that it was an unwise career move and first-team opportunities would be at a premium at a club top-heavy with international talent.

However, the doubters had underestimated Riise's ability and determination, and forgotten that Monaco have a tradition for placing their faith in youth. Not once did the Norwegian teenager look out of his depth during his 10 French League starts last season, and he has continued to grow in stature, winning the confidence of coach Claude Puel with his boundless energy, competitive spirit and a left foot to die for.

Riise's power and high workrate complements the more romantic qualities of fellow midfielders Marcelo Gallardo, Ludovic Giuly and Sabri Lamouchi, while his 30-metre thunderbolt in a 1-0 home win against Bordeaux in February could be France's goal of the season.

"It was a goal I shall never ever forget," said Riise. "I really don't know what came over me. With hindsight, I was probably too far out to shoot, but I still went for it and it flew into the back of the net. It's fantastic to score a goal which has been shown on TV all over Europe. It should help keep me in the plans of the Norway coach."

Riise need have no worries about that. Though he spurned a gilt-edged chance to score on his debut against Iceland in January, subsequent appearances have proved he is made of the right international stuff. He created a goal as Denmark were seen off 4-2 and then scored his first international goal in a 2-0 win in Turkey.

"For the sake of Norwegian football, it would have been better if Riise had not left the country at such a young age and had been left to mature with a leading Norwegian club," argues former Norway defender Age Hareide, now coach at Brondby in Denmark. "Credit goes to Monaco's scouting system. In Riise and Swedish midfielder Pontus Farnerud they have signed two promising youngsters.

"You have to admire the way young Riise has grabbed his chance at Monaco, how he has adapted to a very different style. If his best position is midfield, he's also versatile enough to play up front or at full-back, and he looks made for international football. He must be thought of as a big bonus for the national team with the European Championship coming up."

Nick Bidwell

Fact file

Club Monaco (Fra)
Country Norway
Born September 24, 1980, in Molde
Previous club Aalesund
International debut January 2000, v Iceland
International caps 3 (1 goal)
Honours French League 2000

Wanted man...Hajduk keeper Pletikosa is set to move abroad

Dinamo can't pay players

President quits in cash crisis, writes Zdravko Reic

CROATIA

RECENT political changes in Croatia have caused massive social upheaval, and now even the long-established president of Dinamo Zagreb (formerly FC Croatia) has been replaced because the club is having difficulty meeting its wage bills.

Over the past 10 years, all segments of government were in the hands of the HDZ party, headed by state president Franjo Tudjman. His death at the end of last year led to the HDZ losing an election, an event that affected the whole of Croatia, including football.

The Dinamo president, Zlatko Canjuga, was massively unpopular but had managed to cling to power until it was revealed that the club was £5million in debt. Not even he could withstand that blow, and he has now resigned.

During the Tudjman-Canjuga reign, various business organisations were obliged to donate money to the club, but now that this practice has stopped, the payment of players' salaries has been delayed.

As a result several have threatened to strike, and it is likely that juniors will make up the team in the remaining matches of the season.

Some Dinamo players had been vastly overpaid. Robert Prosinecki, for example, was on £700,000 a year. In comparison, the current national team goalkeeper, 21-year-old Stipe Pletikosa, from Hajduk Split, has an annual salary of only £6,000.

Pletikosa, whose contract expires in summer 2001 and who seems certain to move abroad – Real Madrid already have offered £2million for him – was the only home-based starter in the national team's friendly against Germany in Zagreb, which ended 1-1.

GREECE

Table-topping Bigon gets the boot

ITALIAN coach Alberto Bigon has been fired by Olympiakos – with his team at the top of the table. An announcement from the club said that Bigon had to go after the latest "not too positive" results, which left directors and fans worried about the team's ability to stay in first place.

The new coach is Yiannis Matzourakis.

Olympiakos also are having problems with Slovenian international Zlatko Zahovic, who has been banned for two months and fined £30,000 for verbally abusing Bigon after being substituted.

The association of Greek professional soccer teams, EPAE, took the bold decision at the start of this season to curtail the movement of fans between cities in order to cut down on violence at matches.

But they did not take account of the potential problem of violence at derby games. In the match between PAOK and Aris in Thessaloniki, a penalty award against Aris resulted in irate fans setting fire to chairs, clashing with police and trying to invade the pitch.

Twenty people were injured and 10 were charged with causing damage to the stadium. Both clubs were fined and ordered to play their next two home matches on other grounds.

Second-half goals by Giorgos Amanatidis and Lambros Choutos gave the national team a 2-0 friendly victory over Romania before only 2,500 spectators at the Olympic stadium in Athens.

Lou Economopoulos

TURKEY

Terim in tears

THE VAST majority of Turkish people were genuinely appalled by the deaths of two Leeds fans before their club played Galatasaray in Istanbul in the UEFA Cup semi-final first leg.

Gala coach Fatih Terim was in tears after the game, which his side won 2-0, saying: "If only we had lost and those two men had lived."

Terim did point out that six foreign clubs – Hertha Berlin, Milan, Bologna, Borussia Dortmund, Mallorca and Chelsea – had played Galatasaray in Istanbul earlier this season, all accompanied by fans, and there had been no complaints.

Soccer in Turkey continued in a strange atmosphere after the disaster, with Besiktas making a tremendous effort to overhaul Galatasaray at the top of the table.

At one stage Gala had led by a seemingly uncatchable distance, but Besiktas extended their winning streak to 12 games and cut the margin to six points with five matches to play.

Hasan Cemali

Anguish...Fatih Terim

YUGOSLAVIA

Double chance for Red Star

THOSE who predicted that the title race would be one of the most interesting in recent years have been proved correct. Red Star have taken advantage of the faltering form of first Obilic and then Partizan to go top after 32 rounds.

Red Star's 1-0 win away to Cukaricki extended their unbeaten run to 24 matches and kept them on course for the Double. But the turning point in their season came a week earlier when defeating Partizan 2-1 at home.

The team's recent sequence has been even more impressive, given the fact that first-choice strikers Goran Drulic and Branko Jelic have been out of action with long-term injuries.

One-time leaders Obilic have fallen to third and were eliminated in the Cup quarter-finals by Milicionar. With Partizan already out, Red Star

are hot favourites to lift the trophy. The semi-final draw is: Milicionar v Red Star, Napredak Krusevac v Zemun.

Vladimir Novak

SLOVENIA

Kek kicks off with Purple patch

THE resignation of Maribor coach Bojan Prasnikar has not had the expected effect. Instead of going into decline – they were top of the table with a seven-point lead when Prasnikar went – the Purples proceeded to win their next seven matches and are now virtually certain to take the title for the fourth year running.

With eight matches to play, Maribor have 59 points, 12 more than second-placed HIT Gorica. New coach Matjaz Kek, who was formerly assistant to Prasnikar, could not have dreamed of a better start.

Zdravko Reic

BOSNIA

Unified League moves closer

PREPARATIONS for a League that will include clubs from all three entities within Bosnia-Herzegovina have been progressing steadily, with a firm agreement expected to be reached when the parties concerned meet in late April.

One of the prime movers behind the unified League is Blaz Sliskovic, currently coaching in the Croatian entity. He is once again living in Mostar, where six years ago, during fighting in that city, his house was completely demolished. "We have to forget all the bad things that happened, including the fact that I remained homeless," he said. "Football will unite us."

Zdravko Reic

ISRAEL

Defeat forces Cohen out

MACCABI HAIFA'S push for the League title was dealt a major blow when they lost 2-1 at home to Maccabi Petach Tikva. After the game, coach Eli Cohen stated that he took full responsibility for the team's faltering title challenge and duly resigned.

He has been replaced on a temporary basis by his assistant, Roni Levy.

The result allowed Hapoel Petach Tikva, 2-1 winners on the same weekend, to go second in the table, and after winning away to city rivals Maccabi a week later, closed to within two points of Hapoel Tel Aviv at the top.

Eyal Berkovic scored eight minutes from full time to salvage a 1-1 draw in Israel's home friendly against Georgia. Georgi Kinkladze had put the visitors ahead just before the half hour.

David Nachman

MALTA

Birkirkara set for first title

SIX points ahead with only three games to go...surely Birkirkara must win the first championship in their 50-year history.

A 2-0 win over Hibernians followed by a 5-0 defeat of Pieta Hotspurs suggested that at long last Birkirkara are set to celebrate.

However, Sliema's 2-1 defeat of champions Valletta kept alive their hopes of catching the League leaders.

The national team disappointed in a 3-0 home defeat by Northern Ireland which showed up all the old problems – a lack of commitment in particular.

Domenico Aquilina

MACEDONIA

National team's struggles continue

HOPE is hard to come by on the international front. The team have lost six of their last eight games, the most recent failure coming in Zenica, where a goal by Konjic in the 88th minute gave Bosnia victory.

In the League, Sloga Jugomagnat seem certain to retain the title, having gone 28 games without defeat, including a run of 962 minutes without conceding a goal.

They are also on course for the Double, having drawn 1-1 away to Rabotnicki Kometal in the National Cup semi-final first leg. In the other tie, Pelister and Pobeda drew 2-2.

As the season draws to a close, the pressure has really started to tell, with no fewer than six coaches being dismissed in a month. Nexat Husein of Pelister, Slobodan Goracinov (Makedonija), Dragi Setinov (Vardar), Ilija Dimoski (Napredok), Lazar Plackov (Sileks) and Ljupco Serafimov (Osogovo) all lost their jobs.

Michel Stojmanovski

Pro-File Mateja Kezman

Another Yugo export – but with success in prospect

DURING a recent game, Partizan Belgrade supporters hoisted signs with clear messages, both to their young idol Mateja Kezman and to the club management.

"Mateja, don't let them get rid of you," said one. Another read: "Stop selling."

At the same time newspapers were reporting the huge interest that foreign clubs like Bayern Munich, Lazio, Fiorentina and Milan were showing in the 21-year-old forward.

Kezman's contract does not expire until June 2002, but that is no guarantee that he will stay. Not in the face of such interest.

And the fact that in the past few years many rising talents have left Yugoslavia and failed to make the grade – with Barcelona (Dragan Ciric), Real Madrid (Perica Ognjenovic), Roma (Ivan Tomic), Atletico Madrid (Veljko Paunovic), and Paris SG (Marko Pantelic), to mention only a few – is unlikely to prevent the inevitable happening with the Partizan youngster this summer.

Kezman plays a straight bat when asked about the possibility of a big-money move. "My contract with Partizan is valid for two more years, therefore a possible transfer would be pretty expensive, " he says. "The decision is up to the club. I can't decide anything."

But there can be no denying that he is more than a gifted footballer. He is an intelligent, self-confident young man with a good attitude towards his profession, despite experiencing his fair share of ups and downs.

Kezman, apprenticed to provincial clubs in Pirot, Loznica and Smederevo, broke a leg at the age of 16. Through all that, he proved that he is a fighter and that he knows what he wants.

"On one hand, I would like to play abroad as soon as possible," he says, "because the game there is on a much higher level than in our League and because I would play in packed stadiums. On the other hand, I was brought up here and all my relatives and friends are living here, so I would like to stay in Belgrade. It's not easy to decide – but it's most likely that I'll be leaving Partizan soon."

As for his talent on the pitch, he is fast, a good dribbler, creative, and has a powerful shot with either foot. Kezman, whose father was a First Division goalkeeper with Zemun, also has a fine sense of team play, often helping out in defence.

Many would like to see him at Euro 2000 and Yugoslavia coach Vujadin Boskov has not ruled him out, even though Kezman is still waiting for his international debut. Despite facing tough competition for forward berths from the likes of Predrag Mijatovic, Savo Milosevic and Darko Kovacevic, Kezman should at least make the 22 for Euro 2000.

But that, too, just like the transfer plans, is not up to him.

Vladimir Novak

Fact file

Club Partizan Belgrade
Country Yugoslavia
Born April 12, 1979, in Belgrade
Previous clubs Zemun, Radnicki Pirot, Loznica, Sartid Smederevo
Honours Yugoslavian League 1999 (Partizan)

Back in action...Kalitvintsev called in FIFA to resolve dispute

Kalitvintsev comes home

UKRAINE

Oleg Zadernovsky on a Kyiv hero's return

FORMER Kyiv Dynamo and Ukraine captain Yurii Kalitvintsev is back playing again after a long dispute – just in time for the second part of the Ukraine championship.

Kalitvintsev, nearing his 32nd birthday, has joined another Kyiv club, CSKA, and will play for them to the end of the season at least.

In 1998 he signed a three-year contract with Turkish club Trabzonspor, but last year a difference of opinion resulted in his long-term absence from the team and was not resolved until after he had called on FIFA to intervene.

In his first Premier League match after his return he faced his former club in the Kyiv derby. CSKA took an early lead, but Dynamo hit back to win 3-1.

Shakhtar Donetsk began their attempt to get back to the top of Ukrainian soccer by recruiting a 22-year-old Romanian youth international, Marian Aliutse, from Serif Tiraspol of Moldova.

Aliutse signed a two-year contract worth around £250,000 and made a good start in a 4-0 thrashing of Karpaty Lviv.

Meanwhile, Metalurh Zaporizha signed 26-year-old Yugoslav forward Atso Vasilevitch from Obilic Belgrade.

However, Kyiv Dynamo continue to leave their rivals standing. They followed the win over CSKA by beating Dnipro 2-0 away and Niva Ternopil 4-1 at home to reach 50 points, 12 ahead of Kryvbas.

Tavria Simferopol, winners of the first independent Ukraine championship in 1992, are clear candidates for relegation after three successive defeats. This led to a change of coach, with former Ukraine youth manager Vladimir Muntiyan replacing Anatoliy Korobotchka, who had lasted only six months.

POLAND

Fan sentenced for knife assault

PAWEL Michalski, a 20-year-old Wisla Krakow supporter, has been jailed for six and a half years for throwing a knife at Parma midfielder Dino Baggio during a UEFA Cup match in 1998.

Wisla were banned from European football last season as a result of the incident.

Poland's national team, who have not scored since last August, were held to a disappointing goalless draw by Hungary in Debrecen.

New coach Jerzy Engel, who used 28 players in his first two games, called on only one newcomer against Hungary – Tomasz Zdebel, 27, a midfielder at Lierse in Belgium who is virtually unknown in Poland.

As a teenager Zdebel emigrated to Germany and made his name with Koln. He moved to Belgium in 1997.

The midfielder did not play well against Hungary but Engel said he can develop into a valuable playmaker.

Polonia topped Division One with 47 points, four clear of city rivals Legia Warsaw, thanks to six straight wins.

Dariusz Kurowski

RUSSIA

Rousing derby clash delights capital's fans

AN ECSTATIC Spartak fan told me at a subway station outside the former Lenin stadium: "That was like a real derby game!"

The English word for a match between local rivals has recently become known to Russian fans, and top Moscow clubs Spartak and Lokomotiv showed true derby spirit in front of a 65,000 crowd at Luzhniki Olympic stadium. Three players were sent off and Lokomotiv manager Yuri Syomin was banished for disputing a refereeing decision.

The game ended goalless, with Spartak having a last-minute penalty saved by former keeper Ruslan Nigmatullin.

Victor Gusev

AUSTRIA

Big task for Baric

NATIONAL coach Otto Baric can have learnt little about his squad from the 'water polo' match with Sweden in Graz, and he has much to do before the World Cup campaign.

The game, played after hours of rain, was a farce, though 9,000 braved the elements. Recalled Hearts midfielder Thomas Floegel put the Austrians ahead after 17 minutes, but Sweden equalised four minutes from the final whistle, through Jorgen Pettersson.

Franz Wohlfahrt returned in goal, with Baric unwilling to consider Arsenal's Alex Manninger until he plays more first-team football. In the outfield, the plan seemed to be to pack the midfield, but there was little pattern to the game and what promise there was up front came as usual from Ivica Vastic.

In the League, Rapid's 4-0 victory

Preferred...Wohlfahrt

away to Grazer AK kept them top of the table on goal difference from FC Tirol.

There has also been trouble off the field for the Graz club, with Dieter Ramusch being stripped of the captaincy on the orders of club president Peter Svetits.

Bob Vaughan

SLOVAKIA

Inter take command

INTER'S greater consistency appears to give them the edge over Kosice as the two clubs battle it out for the League title.

After 23 rounds, Inter led by three points, with Trencin a further six points back in third.

Slovan, troubled financially in recent months, have managed to pay their players more regularly since the sales of Tomaschek to Hearts and Koenig to Grasshopper, and they also started the spring campaign more positively.

At the bottom, DAC and Banska Bystrica are the strongest candidates for relegation.

Bob Vaughan

BULGARIA

Balakov back in national squad

KRASSIMIR BALAKOV, who announced his international retirement after France 98, accepted a surprise recall by coach Stoicho Mladenov for the 4-1 win over Belarus in Sofia.

The 34-year-old Stuttgart player may now feature in Mladenov's World Cup qualifying campaign.

After 22 rounds, Levski held a five-point lead over CSKA, but Shumen face relegation, lying 12 points adrift with eight games left.

Bob Vaughan

CZECH REPUBLIC

Slavia look to defence

SLAVIA'S exit from the UEFA Cup has not upset their championship form. However, they may be pushed to take their 12th title now that Sparta, four points behind, are also out of European competition.

Goalscoring has again been the difficulty for the leaders, but their excellent defence, backed by the fine form of 26-year-old goalkeeper Radek Cerny, may do the trick.

Bob Vaughan

HUNGARY

Bicskei seeks strikers

A GOALLESS draw with Poland at Nep Stadion confirmed coach Bertalan Bicskei's problems up front.

He tried Tamas Sandor and Krisztian Kenessi in the second half, after Attila Tokoli and Krisztian Lisztes had failed to score before the break, but they made little impression.

Dunaferr's title march continued with a narrow win over Haladas, but Vasas are looking dangerous.

Bob Vaughan

ROMANIA

Jenei's job under threat

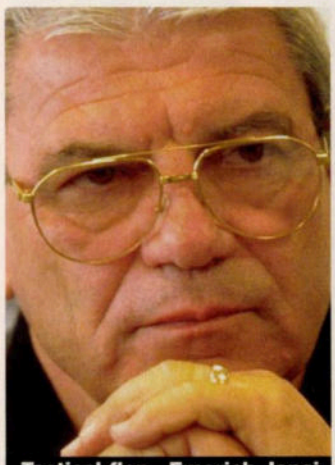
THE national team's 2-0 defeat by Greece in Athens put coach Emerich Jenei under renewed pressure.

Jenei's difficulties began with the withdrawal of three key players – Gheorghe Popescu, Adrian Ilie and Constantin Galca. They were compounded when the 4-4-2 formation, using Gheorghe Hagi in a free role, did not work.

The Romanian press were hugely critical, with one paper calling for the return of the previous national coach, Victor Piturca.

At home, the championship will be decided early, with Dinamo unlikely to be caught at the top.

Bob Vaughan



Tactical flop...Emerich Jenei

AZERBAIJAN

Rebels pay the price

THE eighth round of the national championship was halted when seven clubs declared a lockout and refused to play following a series of discussions between FIFA and two football associations.

One of the FAs, under Fuad Musaev, had been recognised by FIFA to rule the domestic game until 2002. Then another group appeared on the scene, led by Alek Mamedov.

The Mamedov group organised the lockout involving seven clubs – including the top three, Samkir, Neftchi and Kapaz. The Musaev-led FA fined the rebel seven £750 each and awarded 'technical' defeats for the missed games.

Vladimir Kalinkovich

MOLDOVA

Referees attacked

TWO ASSAULTS on referees inside a week have given soccer in the country some unwanted publicity.

Zimbru's home match against Serif was halted when spectators invaded the pitch and a Zimbru official struck the referee.

In Zimbru's next match, Roma Balti goalkeeper Gabriel Tudorache attacked a linesman who had allowed a goal, and then threw several punches at the referee having been sent off. Tudorache has been banned until the end of the season.

Miron Goihman

Pro-file Georgi Demetradze

Dynamo's surefire Georgian filling Shevchenko's shoes

IN A BID to maintain their high-quality attacking play of the past three or four years, Kyiv Dynamo went for an injection of Georgian goalpower in the shape of Georgi Demetradze, lured away from Russian side Alaniya Vladikavkaz at the end of last year.

Dynamo's need to improve their front line was no state secret. Andrii Shevchenko had long since departed for the *dolce vita* of Milan, his ex-striking partner Serhii Rebrov surely will join him in the West this summer, while the youngster touted as the 'new Shevchenko', Uzbekistan international Maksim Shatskih, has yet to convince since his arrival from Baltika Kaliningrad.

With respect to Shatskih, an untried 20-year-old whose advance publicity portrayed him as a cross between Shevchenko and Gerd Muller, 23-year-old Demetradze appears a somewhat safer bet as Dynamo's purveyor of goals. He is quick of thought and movement, a natural scorer, and the figures back him up.

Last season he was the Russian League's top scorer with 21 goals for Alaniya; in the previous season he managed 14 to finish second. Nor does he spend all 90 minutes hovering in the box. Dynamo coach and total football devotee Valerii Lobanovskyi insists on using versatile players, and Demetradze certainly is that.

With a good turn of speed and penchant for raiding along the flanks, he can be just as dangerous when in chance-making mode.

"I love to score goals but I love to create them too," says Demetradze. "I want to win. That's why I'm so pleased to have joined Dynamo. Their excellent Champions League record over the past few years speaks for itself. This is one of the most competitive sides in Europe. My challenge is to help keep it that way.

"We were very disappointed to lose out to Real Madrid [in the Champions League second group phase], but it's been a wonderful experience to play against the likes of Real and Bayern Munich. I'm looking forward to having more good times in this competition."

Demetradze started his career at Georgian flagship club Dinamo Tbilisi – the highlight being his winning goal in the 1995 national Cup Final against Batumi – and after an unproductive spell with Feyenoord, he got his career back on track with a move in 1998 to Alaniya Vladikavkaz.

Demetradze, however, still has much to prove at international level. His main role has been that of understudy to the likes of Shota Arveladze, Temuri Ketsbaia and Zaza Dzhanashia.

But provided Demetradze takes the right cue on the Kyiv Dynamo stage, the tables could soon be turned.

Nick Bidwell

Fact file

Club Kyiv Dynamo (Ukr)
Country Georgia
Born September 26, 1976, in Tbilisi
Previous clubs Dinamo Tbilisi, Feyenoord (Hol), Alaniya Vladikavkaz (Rus)
International debut August 1998, v Ukraine
International caps 7 (0 goals)
Honours Georgian League 1995, 1996, 1997; Georgian Cup 1995, 1996, 1997

Violence cover-up

Brian Homewood reports on an ever-growing problem in Brazilian soccer

BRAZIL

FOOTBALL hooliganism is a big issue with the Brazilian media – until it happens in their own back yard.

When a teenage supporter was killed by a firecracker in Peru's national stadium, Brazilian television showed the incident in all its gory detail. Viewers were again treated to in-depth coverage after two Leeds fans were stabbed to death in Istanbul. And after the murder of a fan in Buenos Aires, newspapers gave readers daily coverage of the hooliganism crisis facing Argentina.

Yet when a man was shot dead by marauding supporters after the Carioca championship game between Cabo Frio and Flamengo, there was silence. Nothing on TV, just the odd paragraph here and there in the newspapers. It is almost as if there is a deliberate campaign to suppress news of such events.

Witnesses told *World Soccer* that after the game, a gang of Flamengo fans began firing shots at rival supporters outside the ground. There was mayhem as fans ran for cover, many trying to force their way back into Cabo Frio's rickety stadium, with police nowhere to be seen. The dead man was named as 37-year-old Joaquim Martins. Two other supporters suffered bullet wounds.

Trouble is frighteningly commonplace outside Brazilian stadia and guns are involved in an alarming number of incidents. Home-made firecrackers and bombs are also popular weapons. Flamengo fans are among the most violent and often fight among themselves if they can't find any opposing fans.

Brazilian media organisations, and the powerful Globo TV network in particular, seem more concerned with their commercial interests than in doing their duty and alerting the nation to the problem.

Globo has bought exclusive rights to the Carioca championship in a deal that also gives it licence to sell tickets and publicity space in stadia. Yet people buying tickets through this channel hear nothing of potential dangers.

"Come and see the matches for yourselves!" scream the commercial breaks. "And bring the family!" Sinister stuff, indeed.

Poll axed...Marcelinho Carioca

'King' acts to calm Big Two

THE BATTLE for supremacy between Romario and Edmundo continues at Vasco da Gama with each apparently intent on proving he is better than the other. Not only do they refuse to look at each other or celebrate goals together, but they have been exchanging insults in the media and trying to outscore each other on the field.

The ultimate battle of egos is being fought out in the Carioca championship, though paradoxically it seems to have benefited Vasco, propelling them to the top of the table. After seven games, they were leading the first stage, having dropped only two points.

Edmundo fired the first shots in more ways than one, scoring four goals in the first three games, while Romario, still recovering from a pulled muscle, did not get one.

The match against Bangu provided a moment of pure comedy. Midway through the first half, Vasco were awarded a penalty. Romario got there first in the race to grab the ball, took the kick – and missed.

Shortly afterwards, Edmundo opened the scoring and then, in a half-time interview, disparagingly dubbed Romario "The Prince", implying that he was given preferential treatment at the club.

"I've been training all week but the King [vice-president Eurico Miranda] wants the Prince to take the kick," he said.

Romario was not to be outdone. In a 6-0 win over Americano, he scored four goals, including two of astonishing skill, and provided the pass from which Edmundo stayed one goal ahead in the scoring table.

Four days later, Romario scored a hat-trick in a 4-1 win over Olaria and quipped: "Now, everyone in the

WORLD CUP QUALIFIERS

First round runs true to form

THE first round of the 20-month South American World Cup qualifying tournament produced no surprises.

Brazil's 0-0 draw with Colombia in Bogota was not unexpected because the home side lined up a five-men defence and used only one striker. Brazil played Jardel and Elber, effectively reserve attackers, and neither made an impression.

Uruguay duly secured a 1-0 victory over Bolivia in Montevideo, though the visitors, notoriously weak when playing at sea level, outran their hosts, forgot their usual defensive tactics, and went close to equalising.

Argentina were the highest scorers with a 4-1 home win over Chile in Buenos Aires, with Gabriel Batistuta scoring a record 51st goal in internationals and Juan Veron scoring twice.

The Lazio man was the pick of the Argentinians, with Javier Zanetti and hard-working Ariel Ortega, the latter forming a three-man attack with Batistuta and Cristian Gonzalez, also making notable contributions.

Early in the second half, with the score at 2-1, Chile made a fight of it. David Pizarro was impressive in midfield and Ivan Zamorano had two good chances to equalise.

Peru played attractive soccer in their 2-0 home win over Paraguay, showing quick dribbling skill and effective use of a short passing game. Unusually, Paraguay looked mistake-prone in defence, and their cause was not helped when a penalty by Jose Luis Chilavert was saved.

Ecuador, banking on the altitude in Quito (2,800 metres) and playing matches in the noon heat to win all their home games, will have to do better than in the 2-0 win over Venezuela, whose aspiration is not to finish bottom.

After protracted discussions with FIFA, it was finally agreed that clubs abroad would release South American internationals just four days before World Cup qualifying games instead of five. Meanwhile, others have thought up more novel ways of overcoming the wear and tear that will be caused by the protracted qualification programme.

Perhaps the most radical came from Argentina FA president Julio Grondona, who wants all previous World Cup winners to go directly into the finals. FIFA president Sepp Blatter, who watched the Argentina-Chile match, opposes the idea.

Eric Weil

Goals...Veron had double joy

kingdom is happy. The King, the Prince and the Court Jester." No prizes for guessing who he meant by the latter.

By this time, the whole thing was starting to look as staged as a pre-boxing bout press conference. Perhaps realising it was all getting over the top, King Miranda stepped in and told the pair to shut up.

Vasco met Botafogo, their only serious threat in the championship, in their seventh match and played out a dire goalless draw, though Botafogo had a seemingly good goal disallowed for a supposed foul. This incensed Botafogo president Mauro Ney Palmeiro, who launched a scathing attack on referee Claudio Cerdeira.

"He has had a brilliant career but he is in no state to referee any more," said Palmeiro. "He's too fat and should be at home, watching the match on television in his pyjamas. I don't think there's any plot to favour Vasco – the problem is that the referees are genuinely bad. If Cerdeira hadn't refereed, we'd have had one even worse."

While Palmeiro spoke of a metaphorical robbery, three Botafogo players were victims of a real one. Reserve goalkeeper Ricardo Gomes, midfielder Alexandre Gaucho and striker Dimba were in a car held up at gunpoint in Niteroi, across the bay from Rio. The robbers made off with the car as well as the players' watches, documents, money and clothes, leaving them half-naked.

Over in smoggy Sao Paulo, the horrendously complicated Paulista (Sao Paulo state) championship was bogged down in a meaningless second stage. Everyone knows that at the end of the day, Corinthians, Palmeiras, Santos and Sao Paulo will qualify for the quarter-finals along with four smaller teams.

Corinthians were in fine fettle, qualifying with four games to spare. Midfielder Ricardinho and striker Edilson were rewarded with national team calls, but not Marcelinho Carioca, their other big name. Perhaps Brazil manager Wanderley Luxemburgo was still mindful of all the problems he had with Marcelinho when at Corinthians.

To add insult to injury, Marcelinho was voted Brazil's most hated player by readers of *Placar* magazine – probably because the public were fed up with constant references to Jesus and God from a player who has committed truly horrendous fouls.

Many still remember Marcelinho's cynical behaviour in last year's Paulista championship Final, which was abandoned after a massive brawl between the players. Scarcely had the pitch been cleared than Marcelinho unfurled a banner which read: "Jesus, this victory is yours."

Palmeiras, topping their group in the Paulista, were surprisingly well beaten away to Bolivian side The Strongest in the Libertadores Cup.

The defeat was particularly embarrassing for goalkeeper Marcos, who, during the sides' first encounter in Sao Paulo, had nonchalantly drunk a cup of coffee, handed to him by a photographer, while the ball was in play. The Strongest, beaten 4-0 on that day, took this as a sign of contempt and thoroughly enjoyed their 4-2 revenge win at altitude, celebrating their goals by sitting in a circle and pretending to drink cups of coffee.

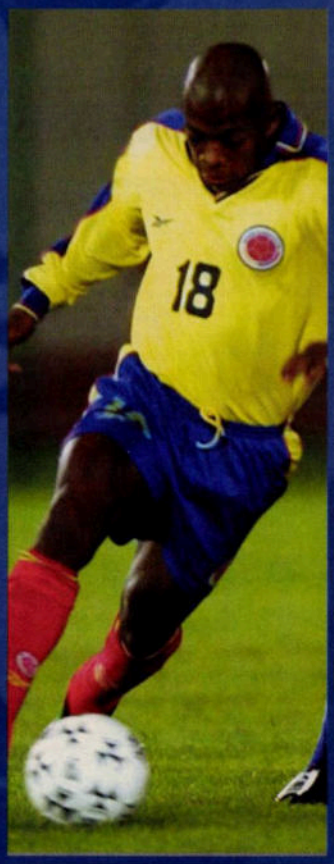
Palmeiras manager Luiz Felipe Scolari seemed unperturbed by all this, and was more upset by reports of a row with some directors, so much so that he imposed a two-week media silence. When this ended, he immediately attacked what he dubbed "the peanut brigade" – supporters who sat in the expensive seats during Palmeiras home matches and did nothing but scoff peanuts and jeer the team.

He had a simple message for anybody else who didn't see eye to eye, saying: "My contract is until the end of the year so they're going to have to put up with me."

Brian Homewood

Pro-file Rubiel Quintana

Scouts attracted by flying full-back with flair to spare



COLOMBIA were the disappointment of France 98. They were the only Latin American side not to reach the second round, and the poor showing led to a number of changes in the national set-up. Hernan Dario Gomez was replaced as coach by Javier Alvarez, who passed the torch to a new generation of internationals and altered the style of play. Instead of the endless midfield inter-passing, the new Colombia also looked to attack down the flanks.

Flying right-back Rubiel Quintana burst on to the international stage on the eve of last year's Copa America, and was soon a vital part of the coach's plans. Alvarez said: "He's fast and strong, and takes full advantage of the space in front of him. His movement and technique are good, and he's intelligent.

"He has the ability to change the rhythm of the game, and can score goals as well as set them up. He's the player who can tip the balance."

The scales tipped against Alvarez after his Under-23 side suffered a 9-0 defeat by Brazil in the South American pre-Olympic tournament.

Quintana was part of the Colombia team that left the field bemused and bedraggled. But despite the crushing defeat, he had been involved in the move of the match – a swift break down the right and wonderful pull-back for striker Munoz to roll the ball inches wide. Had the ball gone in the net the course of the game could have changed and Alvarez might still be in the national job.

Instead, Quintana now has to fight for a senior team place under new coach Luis Augusto Garcia. More conservative than Alvarez, Garcia could prefer a more defensively minded player. That would be a shame. Quintana in full flow is a magnificent sight.

"My heroes are Faustino Asprilla and Freddy Rincon," he says, and the sheer exuberance of the two veterans is a key part of his game.

"I'm continually looking to get forward. I'm a full-back who is looking to make a contribution in attack as well as defence."

Quintana has many admirers among European scouts, who will be keen to check on his progress now he has joined America, one of Colombia's major clubs.

Repeating the mantra of all South American players, Quintana says: "The prospect of playing in Spain or Italy is attractive."

First, though, there are some local battles to be fought.

Tim Vickery

Fact file

Club America
Country Colombia
Born June 26, 1978, in Cali
Previous clubs
Boca Juniors (Arg), Cortulua
International debut
May 1999, v El Salvador
International caps 9

Riquelme leads Boca to the top

ARGENTINA

Impressive home record is key to Juniors title-chase advantage, writes Eric Weil

Excellence in midfield...Riquelme advanced to strike vital goal

BOCA JUNIORS, unbeaten at home in 34 games, gained a vital away victory in the eighth round of the 19-game national closing championship, beating San Lorenzo 1-0 to take a one-point lead over them in the table.

Young midfielder Juan Riquelme was again outstanding and scored midway through the first half. Boca then had to thank their Colombian international goalkeeper, Oscar Cordoba, for keeping them in front, because San Lorenzo did enough in the second half to deserve a draw.

The Lanus-Velez Sarsfield match, suspended after 15 seconds when a noise bomb hit Velez goalkeeper Jose Luis Chilavert, will be replayed. Lanus have forfeited three points.

Racing Club continue playing with court permission and have now been promised government help to stay open despite bankruptcy.

The country's vice-president, Carlos Alvarez, is a Racing fan, but in the uncertainty the performances continue to suffer, and after nine games they were fifth from bottom with just seven points.

The Argentinian FA has approved the investment of outside capital in soccer clubs, and the first deal came at Second Division club Quilmes. It favours the investors, who are paying the club's £2.3million debt and investing in youth development over 10 years. In return, they hold the title deeds of the stadium and varying percentages of all contracts.

● Carlos Roa, Argentina's first-choice goalkeeper during the 1998 World Cup, is in training to return to soccer with Mallorca.

Roa, a Seventh Day Adventist, retired last season because he felt a professional football career was not compatible with his religion – he is not allowed to work on Saturdays.

Mallorca respect that decision – and they still hold his contract.

URUGUAY

Bengoechea makes timely return

VETERAN midfielder Pablo Bengoechea returned from a three-month suspension to help Penarol to their biggest Libertadores Cup victory of the season, 5-1 against Chile's Universidad Catolica.

Defending champions Penarol then beat Bella Vista Montevideo 3-2 to join them in third place in the opening championship, four points behind leaders Nacional, who could only draw 1-1 with lowly Cerro.

Bengoechea was suspended following a drugs test in December after Penarol's Mercosur Cup semi-final with Brazil's Flamengo. He maintains he never took drugs.

Argentinian striker Pablo Islas, formerly of Boca Juniors, tops the scoring charts with eight goals, having netted in all of Racing's seven matches.

Islas was passed to Racing by Daniel Lalin, the former president of Argentina's Racing Club. Lalin has registered a number of Racing Argentina players with Racing Uruguay to avoid their being auctioned off from the bankrupt Argentinian club.

Lalin has a five-year contract with Racing Uruguay, paying half the club's monthly £34,000 budget in return for half of any player sales.

He is not popular in Argentina – where he filed Racing's bankruptcy as principal creditor – yet is looked upon as Uruguayan Racing's saviour.

Former Argentinian international midfielder Alejandro Manuco left Bella Vista Montevideo complaining that they train at grounds with no changing rooms and have no money to provide soap or towels. But their financial position is better than that of many other clubs in the country.

Eric Weil

Back after ban...Bengoechea

ROUND-UP

Teenage fan killed by celebration flare

A 17-YEAR-OLD fan was killed in **PERU** by a flare set off by a former military officer to celebrate Universitario's goal against Union Minas in Lima.

The match was suspended, then resumed, with champions Universitario winning 2-0. They continue to lead the opening championship by one point ahead of Melgar.

CHILE: Cobreloa, Santiago Morning, Colo Colo and champions Universitario won the four groups to qualify for the semi-finals of the pre-season championship, but this, as well as the start of the First Division championship, was held up by a strike.

The players' union said that the championship cannot start if players are owed money – and Deportes Iquique, relegated last season, owe players £181,000.

COLOMBIA: Only three points separate top and bottom in the eight-team Group A of the opening championship. In Group B, Deportes Tolima and Deportivo Cali are well ahead.

ECUADOR: The country's most popular club, Barcelona, have fallen on hard times, both financially and on the field. The 7-0 defeat by El Nacional was too much, and Argentinian coach Marcelo Trobbiani was fired.

He has been replaced by his compatriot Ruben Insua, who took the club to their only Libertadores Cup Final in 1998.

VENEZUELA: Ital-Chacao lead Union Tachira by one point with five matches to go in the closing championship.

Eric Weil

Jet-lag...Matthaus has yet to impress

Gently does it

USA

Paul Gardner reports as Matthaus makes a quiet start

THE arrival of Lothar Matthaus and his debut for MetroStars has been the glamour event of Major League Soccer's fifth season.

The first press conference was glamorous enough – Matthaus was rushed to the event straight off the plane from Germany, and an unruly mass of photographers and TV cameramen jostling and shoving lends excitement to any event.

Matthaus said a few words in English and managed to make walking out on Bayern Munich at the most crucial moment of their season sound perfectly reasonable.

Nor did anyone quite understand what he meant when he added: "For me it is important not to miss any games with MetroStars. But I would like to play in the European Cup and be available for the national team."

There were a couple of sceptical questions about how long Matthaus intended to stay in New York, and a request for the answer to be repeated when he mentioned "years" instead of the one year of his current contract.

Then came his first game as a MetroStar – away to Miami Fusion. MetroStars have looked a poor team for a long time and, with Matthaus contributing little, they still look poor.

"I was more of a fireman than an orchestrator," the German said afterwards. "So that nothing burned down in the back, I had to resist going forward." But things did go up in smoke at the back and MetroStars lost 3-1.

Their next game, at home to DC United, drew a decent crowd – over 27,000 – and they saw MetroStars win 3-2. The not-so-good news was that Matthaus again looked as if he had just stepped off a plane (which he had, having played for Germany against Croatia in between the two MetroStars games), and again he did not rate too highly in the energy-output stakes.

In the second half, when DC's Jaime Moreno – not for the first time – sailed smoothly past him, Matthaus turned, tackled late, and gave away a penalty.

Sure enough, the victory proved a false dawn. One week later, Matthaus and MetroStars went to San Jose and were soundly beaten 2-0.

While it would not be true to say that Matthaus was an anonymous figure, if you consider what he is supposed to do for this team, then maybe it's not too wide of the mark.

As for getting to know his team-mates, Matthaus does not have too much time. At the beginning of June he, presumably, goes back to Europe to play for Germany in what could be a stay lasting the whole month of Euro 2000.

While Matthaus was hopping on and off planes, the season's other heavyweight MLS signing, Hristo Stoichkov, was very nearly off to a dream start when his team, Chicago Fire, opened in Dallas. Fire were leading 2-1 at half-time after two superbly taken goals, both by Stoichkov. But the fairy tale turned sour in the second half, when Dallas came up with three.

"It seems like a good League, with lots of experienced players," said Stoichkov. His next exploit was to get himself sent off for a tackle from behind in his second game. After sitting out Fire's third, Stoichkov came back to score with a 30-yard free-kick of stunning power against DC United. But again Fire lost the game.

Another new signing, Costa Rican forward William Sunsing of New England Revolution, also had some adaptation problems. At the end of his team's 1-1 game against Miami, Sunsing pulled off his shirt ready to exchange it – unaware of the MLS rule that calls for 10 minutes of overtime. The shirt went back on.

Overtime seems unlikely to produce many golden goals. At the time of writing, four games have been tied at 90 minutes – and only one has had an overtime goal.

Even that lone golden goal – scored for Columbus Crew by Robert Warzycha – was highly questionable. The Pole should have been sent off during regulation time, when he punched the ball out of the goal.

Another MLS novelty – one that the rest of the world will catch up with later this year – is the new FIFA six-second limitation on goalkeeper possession. Some keepers, on gathering the ball, have taken to racing up to the edge of the area – from where they distribute as wildly as ever. Long, aimless punts downfield are still the staple.

MEXICO

Puebla face double trouble if Angeles go up

THE CITY of Puebla is witness to an odd situation just now – one that shows anything is possible in the crazy world of Mexican soccer.

The club named Puebla were relegated to the Second Division at the end of 1998-99, but bought a franchise from another club, renamed it Puebla Angeles, filled it with reserve players, and carried on as before – with the first team continuing in the top division and the Angeles in Division Two.

All perfectly acceptable in Mexico…but now a problem has arisen. Angeles, surprisingly though it may be, look likely to win the Second Division championship, which carries automatic promotion to the top flight.

So Puebla could have two teams in the First Division next season, which would cause a big problem for the game's rulers.

With only four matches left in the Summer League, Toluca were the only club certain of a play-off place. Atlas, Atletico Morelia and Santos Laguna look likely winners of the other groups.

The fifth top-division coaching change of the season happened when Pumas UNAM replaced one of their former players, Rafael Amador, with Hugo Sanchez, fulfilling his long-stated desire to be a coach.

Sore point...Sanchez opened old wounds

He proceeded to inspire his young team to two victories before they lost at home to Tigres UNL.

Sanchez was a great player, but is not popular with former colleagues because of his tendency to criticise. Soon after taking the Pumas job, he caused a storm by complaining about the World Cup quarter-final six years ago, blaming the then national manager, Miguel Meija Baron (now coach of Atlante), for not playing him against Bulgaria.

Unless Sanchez matures and learns to think before speaking, he will have problems.

Carlos Ramirez

Mouloudia make shock exit

Mark Gleeson reviews the early rounds of the continent's club competitions

SHOCKS in the opening rounds of the African club competitions are traditionally hard to come by, and this year only 1976 African champions Mouloudia Alger suffered an embarrassing defeat. They were beaten 5-1 away by Jeanne d'Arc of Senegal after a 1-1 draw at home, and so were put out of the Champions League.

Although Algerian football is now long past its former glory, the 6-2 aggregate loss was a big blow.

Mouloudia scored first in the return through Athanaze Toukianou after seven minutes. But his team-mate Cheikh Benzerga was sent off five minutes later, precipitating a collapse. Abdoulaye Keita and Aly Diallo scored before half-time, with Niokhor Fall (two) and Ibrahim Dia getting the rest.

Jeanne d'Arc's reward, if it can be termed that, is a second-round clash with defending champions Raja Casablanca of Morocco, who beat Dragons l'Oueme of Benin 5-3 on aggregate.

Egypt's Al Ahly lost 1-0 to Tusker FC in Nairobi, but progressed 3-2 on aggregate. Substitute George Maina gave the Kenyans a 59th-minute lead but they could not add a second, which would have put them through on the away goals rule.

The potential fairytale upset in the Seychelles failed to materialise, with Alexander Phiri quickly ending any hopes of a shock win for home club St Michel United against the Zimbabwean champions, Highlanders. St Michel got into the first round only after a protest against Vacoas Phoenix of Mauritius, who were found to have used a suspended player when they beat the Seychellois in the preliminary round.

The part-timers restricted Highlanders to one goal in the first leg in Bulawayo, even though coach Brian Uranie could not get time off work to travel. In the second leg, Phiri scored twice in the first half to give Highlanders a 2-0 win and a 3-0 aggregate victory.

Crowd violence brought a premature end to the Cup-winners Cup tie in Blantyre, Malawi, between Telecom Wanderers and Coffee FC of Ethiopia. Wanderers trailed 3-0 from the first leg but goals from Hendrix Banda and Albert Mpinganjira had them back in contention by half-time. When Coffee scored in the 84th minute to extend their aggregate lead, fighting broke out in the stands, and the game was abandoned. Wanderers are expected to be banned and fined.

There was more unrest at the Cup-winners Cup tie between Ivory Coast's ASEC Abidjan and ASC Ndiambour of Senegal. ASEC's president, Roger Ouegnin, was stoned by angry fans after their team was surprisingly beaten on away goals in a 3-3 aggregate tie.

In the CAF Cup first round, holders Etoile Sahel of Tunisia went within a goal of equalling the record for the biggest margin of victory in African club competition, beating Chingale of Mozambique 10-0 at home before winning the return in Maputo by the only goal. The record was set 10 years ago by Pamba Sports of Tanzania, who beat the Seychelles' Anse Boileau 12-1 in the Cup-winners Cup.

Dragons slayers...Raja Casablanca (white shirts) take on Dragons l'Oueme in the Champions League

Bravo!

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Golden goal...Pius Ikedia put Nigeria on course for Sydney

OLYMPIC GAMES

Late double puts Nigeria through

NIGERIA scored twice in injury time in their final qualifying match to secure their place at the Olympic Games in Sydney later this year.

The Nigerians, gold medallists in Atlanta four years ago, had to rally from behind in their group of four to pip Angola and Zimbabwe on goal difference.

Cameroon and Morocco were the two other African countries to qualify directly, while South Africa, the best runners-up, will play Oceania candidates New Zealand over two legs to decide a further place at the Olympics.

Nigeria's opponents on the final day, Zimbabwe, went into the game in Lagos needing just a draw to qualify, but they were 2-0 down at half-time after goals from Emmanuel Ebiede. Then as added time was being played at the end of the second half, Yakubu Aiyegbeni scored a third for Nigeria and Ajax reserve Pius Ikedia added a vital fourth.

With the top three all finishing on 12 points, the result gave Nigeria a one-goal advantage over Angola, who beat Uganda 1-0 away in their last match. Chinho's 85th-minute goal would have been enough to put his country through had not Ikedia scored just before the end of the game in Lagos.

As for Zimbabwe, the result was a devastating blow and maintained their unenviable record of never having reaching the finals of a major tournament.

Angola's hopes of sneaking through into the best runners-up spot were ended 24 hours later when South Africa secured second place in Group B by beating Guinea 4-1. This put them on 13 points, one more than the Angolans and two ahead of Egypt, who were runners-up in Group C.

Cameroon made sure of top place in Group B with a 3-0 away win over Ghana, Samuel Eto'o scoring twice.

Eto'o, who played for the full national team at the Nations Cup this year, had missed most of the Olympic team's qualifiers but was brought in to make sure there were no last-minute hiccups.

Morocco had to come from a goal down against Ivory Coast to secure the automatic qualifying place in Group C. They won 2-1 in Casablanca with goals from Abdelfatah El Khattari and Karim Benkouar. Egypt took second spot after a first-minute penalty put them on their way to a 3-0 win over Tunisia in Sousse.

Mark Gleeson

ROUND-UP

Bright is back

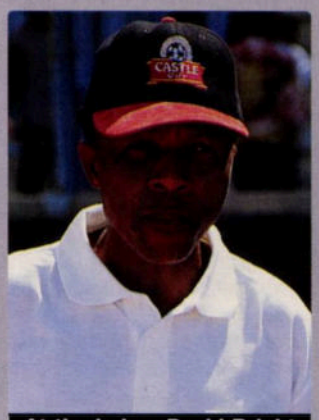
BOTSWANA have re-appointed David Bright as national coach. He takes over from the German Joachim Figge who was in charge for just two months.

Elsewhere in **SOUTHERN AFRICA**, Ferroviario Maputo held a slender lead after 17 rounds of the **MOZAMBICAN** championship, topping city rivals Costa do Sol on goal difference.

National team captain Chiquinho Conde, who plays for Vitoria Setubal in Portugal, has announced his retirement from international football after 15 years.

Mamelodi Sundowns have a 10-point lead at the top of the **SOUTH AFRICAN** League and look set for a third successive title. They are also in the Cup semi-finals, along with AmaZulu, Kaizer Chiefs and Umtata Bucks.

In **ANGOLA**, a referee has assaulted a journalist who criticised his recent performances on the field. Radio reporter Pepe Antonio was attacked by Jose Mundial after intimating that the official might have taken a bribe before a tournament in Lubango.



At the helm...David Bright

A 100 per cent start to the season has Blue Waters already five points clear in the **NAMIBIAN** League.

CENTRAL AFRICA

DR CONGO international defender Essele Bakasu, who was seeking to sign for English club Cambridge United, has returned home to join Kinshasa's Vita Club. Bakasu played for his country at the Nations Cup finals earlier this year.

Bata Bullets need two points from their last three matches to take the **MALAWI** Super League title away from Telecom Wanderers. It would be revenge for defeat by Wanderers in the Cup Final.

EAST AFRICA

Kampala City Council of **UGANDA** have sacked their Sierra Leonean coach Abo Koroma, and installed former Kenyan international Hussein Kheri in his place.

ETHIOPIA will host next year's African Under-20 championship from March 18 to April 1. The Under-17 championship will be staged in the Seychelles from February 18 to March 3.

TANZANIA'S League has been divided into four regional groups this year, with Pamba, Kajumolo, Simba and Coastal leading their respective divisions.

Former Tanzania national team coach Sunday Kayuni has left **KENYAN** club Coastal Stars after they were beaten in the first round of the Cup-winners Cup by Canon Yaounde of Cameroon.

NORTH AFRICA

CR Belouzidad maintained their five-point lead in the **ALGERIAN** Super League, over ESS and Mouloudia Oran.

Champions Al Ahly were 10 points ahead of Cairo rivals Zamalek after 15 games in the **EGYPTIAN** League. The club have fined Mosheer Hanafi after he refused to sit on the bench for the game against Qanah.

Mohamed Ali has taken over as the new coach of Al Masry.

WEST AFRICA

Frenchman Patrick Parizon has signed an 18-month contract as the new coach of **IVORY COAST**, replacing Martin Gbonke Tia.

Porto and Sporting are not only fighting it out for the title in Portugal – two clubs with the same names are also the pacesetters in **GUINEA-BISSAU**.

NIGERIA are to organise a benefit match for former captain Stephen Keshi, who is now the national team's assistant coach.

Mark Gleeson

Moving again?...Ali Daei

Aiming for England

Michael Church on the Premiership ambitions of Ali Daei

ASIA's Player of the Year for 1999, Iranian Ali Daei, has his sights set on the Premier League, despite having two years remaining on his contract with Hertha Berlin.

Speaking at the awards ceremony at the start of April, he said: "I would like to play in England and if I had a good offer then I would like to change my club.

"I think I play well in the air and I'm strong on the ball, so it's better for me to play in England. That's the best style for me."

If Daei were to move in the near future, it would be his fourth club in less than four years. He left Pirouzi for Arminia Bielefeld in June 1997, then went to Bayern Munich and – frustrated at being nothing more than a bit-part player – to Hertha, where he has had considerable success.

The late Uzbekistan coach Mahmoud Rahkimov was named Coach of the Year. He had guided his country to the Asian Cup finals before being killed in a car crash. China's Sun Wen got a special award for her heroics at the Women's World Cup, her side were Team of the Year, and Qatar's Waleed Hamzah was named Young Player of the Year.

ASIAN CUP

Iran reach final 12

ALL 12 qualifiers for the finals of the Asian Cup, to be played in Lebanon in October, are now known.

Qatar, South Korea, Iran and Thailand completed the line-up, with the latter two struggling in the group stages.

Iran were surprise losers to Bahrain in the first round but still qualified ahead of Syria on goal difference after the pair drew 1-1 in Tehran.

The Thais also were less than convincing when expected to cruise through, losing 3-2 to Malaysia in their first meeting. But victories against the Malaysians in the return, North Korea and Taiwan were enough for them to win the group by a point.

Qatar overcame the strong challenge of Jordan, surprise package Palestine, Pakistan and Kazakhstan, while South Korea eased past Myanmar, Mongolia and Laos.

The quartet join holders Saudi Arabia and hosts Lebanon in the finals along with Japan, China, Indonesia, Uzbekistan, Iraq and Kuwait.

Michael Church

ROUND-UP

Hot-shot Scrivin

VETERAN striker Igor Scrivin shot Mohun Bagan to their second **INDIAN** National title in four years. Scrivin, now 36, scored twice in their final victory, 4-0 over Tollygunj Agrami, to reach 13 goals.

Mohun Bagan finished on 47 points, six ahead of Churchill Brothers, with defending champions Salgaocar third on 39.

BST Jullundar and IYTI Bangalore are relegated, and replaced by Air India of Bombay and Vasco of Goa.

KAZAKHSTAN'S Samat Smackov, 21, has joined Russian Premier League club Rostselmash from Irtysh Pavlodor. He impressed with his performances in the quarter-finals of the Asian Club Championship.

Al Nassr of **SAUDI ARABIA**, Asia's representatives in the World Club Championship, have sacked their Yugoslavian head coach, Milan Zivadinovic. He was replaced by caretaker Youssef Khamis after Al Nassr were beaten 3-1 by Al Shabab in the last 16 of the Saudi Arabian Cup.

Abbahani KC clinched the inaugural **BANGLADESH** National League title with an unbeaten record after a goalless draw against arch-rivals Mohammedan SC in the eight-team League's final game. The draw left Abbahani with 14 points.

Armed Forces have shown strong early form by collecting full points from their first five matches in the 12-team **SINGAPORE** S-League. Tanjong Pagar United are second with 13 points, but holders Home United are down to fifth with nine.

Saunders beat Ratnam 2-0 in the final play-off of the **SRI LANKAN** League, to clinch a sixth title.

Underdogs Shabab Al Sahel won 5-4 in a penalty shoot-out against Safa to lift the **LEBANESE** Cup for the first time.

Michael Church, Azam Mahmood, Bhasi Malaparamba & Mohamed Chbaro

Happier days...Milan Zivadinovic, now sacked by Al Nassr

CUP-WINNERS CUP

Shimizu claim the prize

JAPAN'S Shimizu S-Pulse lifted their first-ever continental title when they won the Cup-winners Cup in Chiangmai, northern Thailand, against a spirited but outclassed Al Zawra of Iraq.

A goal by teenage debutant Shohei Ikeda 16 minutes from time took the trophy back to Japan for the first time since 1995.

The J.League club, coached by former Tottenham Hotspur defender Steve Perryman, only qualified for the competition by default, taking the Japanese berth in the championship after 1999 Emperor's Cup winners Yokohama Flugels went bankrupt.

In the semi-finals, Shimizu's unfancied opponents, Bangkok Bank of Thailand, put up a strong fight and held the Japanese to a goalless draw. However, Shimizu proved the stronger in the ensuing shoot-out, winning 4-2 on penalties.

Al Zawra reached the Final by beating Navbakhor of Uzbekistan 2-1 in sudden-death extra-time. Their opponents should have been Saudi Arabia's Al Ahli, who beat Navbakhor in the last eight, but they withdrew from the contest at a late stage. Many believe that the reason behind the withdrawal is the long-running dispute between the governments of Saudi Arabia and Thailand, where the closing stages of the tournament were held.

In the Final, the Baghdad side were no match for S-Pulse, though the Japanese, playing teenagers Kohei Hiramatsu and Hitoshi Matsushima in attack because of injury, struggled to score.

It took 18-year-old substitute defender Ikeda to show them how to finish, the centre-half firing under the keeper with a right-foot drive.

Michael Church

JAPAN

Tokyo star in the early rush

FC TOKYO are the talk of the J.League with a remarkable series of wins in their first month in the top flight. Six games into the season, however, it's already looking as if no team will run away with this year's title. Kashiwa Reysol are the sole team left with only one defeat, and a mere point separates the top seven.

Despite several key signings, Tokyo still look like J.League minnows – on paper. On the pitch, however, they have been fighting like tigers, and unsettling the best teams in the League.

After beating Yokohama F Marinos on the opening day, they have gone on to upset Nagoya Grampus Eight and Jubilo Iwata, as well as running Reysol and Kashima Antlers close.

Brazilian striker Tuto, 21, has been the biggest revelation in his first season in Division One (he played with Kawasaki Frontale in Division Two last year). He is a spectacular goal-getter and lets few chances slip, while being ably supported by fellow striker Amaral and Yukihiko Sato, a tireless right-winger.

The only disappointment for Tokyo is the small attendances, which shows the difficulties that new teams still face coming into the established League. Even so, Tokyo fans have some of the best chants in the League and give an unforgettable rendition of 'You'll Never Walk Alone' before every game.

Yokohama F Marinos are now getting their act together. Three consecutive wins have taken them top on 12 points, alongside Jubilo and Reysol.

Marinos playmaker Shunsuke Nakamura, 21, has done well at both club and national team level, and scored a spectacular goal from a free-kick in the 4-0 win against the New Zealand Olympic team.

Nakamura always looked rather slight in the past, but has now developed physically and is drawing the attention of several European clubs. He is a dead-ball specialist with a wonderful left foot, and an incisive passer.

Kashima Antlers won their first three games, just like last year, then started to slip. Their biggest disappointment is star signing Bebeto, who has looked all of his 36 years and has been substituted in all his first four outings.

"Bebeto's still not used to the speed and physical contact of the J.League," says Antlers manager Toninho Cerezo. "I'm giving him advice, but he's still not fitting in."

Avispa Fukuoka's big close-season signing, Flavio Zandona, was even more unsettled, and has left the club without playing a single game. His pregnant wife decided she did not want to have her baby in Japan.

The full national team again failed to score in a 0-0 draw with China in Kobe. However, despite the scoreline, the game was exciting.

Mike Plastow & Michi Ishijima

Pro-file Sami Al-Jaber

Saudi looking for a change

SAUDI ARABIAN international Sami Al-Jaber recently spent a week on trial with English First Division club Nottingham Forest, but the fact that it went largely unreported is hardly surprising given the increasing number of foreign imports landing in England in recent years.

For football in the Middle East, however, and for Al-Jaber in particular, any potential move arising out of his stint with the former European champions could have huge repercussions for the region's game.

Until now no Arabian player has made it on to the major footballing stage and, with the Saudis effectively blocking all international movement of their players until two years ago, the opportunities for development have been denied.

Saudi Arabia's poor showing at the France World Cup brought an end to the restrictions but European clubs have been slow to mine the nation's football seams. And while the players are now allowed to move abroad, there remains little encouragement from within the game.

Al-Jaber, who was at the City Ground for a week at the start of April, has been one of the policy's fiercest critics. "They [the football authorities] think that because I'm a big star here I can only go to Barcelona or Manchester United or Inter Milan, but that's wrong," says the 27-year-old of the problems he has had convincing the authorities to let him go abroad.

"Look at the Iranians and the Japanese; they have gone to small clubs and then proved they are capable and moved on. We have to do the same. We can't expect Inter Milan to come and sign someone without knowing what they are capable of. We have to prove ourselves first. These people don't understand this."

Al-Jaber's trial with Forest came about after his showing for Saudi Arabia in their 0-0 draw with England at Wembley before the World Cup had impressed Forest coach David Platt. He, however, was unable to see him in competitive action, a request for international clearance being turned down because Al-Jaber was registered to appear for Al Hilal in the semi-finals of the Asian Club Championship, and did not want to risk jeopardising his participation.

"I was very impressed with the club and their professionalism," said Al-Jaber at the end of his trial. "The club is going to have a look at me playing in the Asian Club Championship and hopefully I'll be able to make a move at the end of the season.

"David Platt is very ambitious and wants to take the club into the Premier League. Hopefully this is my way of breaking into English football."

Michael Church

Fact file

Club Al Hilal
Country Saudi Arabia
Born December 11, 1972
International caps 93 (33 goals)
Honours Gulf Cup 1994; Asian Cup 1996; Asian Cup-winners Cup 1996; Asian Super Cup 1997

NEXT MONTH

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ACROSS

7 Zaragoza and Paraguay midfielder born in Argentina (5)
8 Iranian striker recently transferred from Koln to San Jose Earthquakes (5)
9 Freiburg forward in Tunisia's 2000 African Nations Cup side (7)
10 Hapoel Tel Aviv attacker called up by Moller Nielsen for Israel (3)
11 2000 African Super Cup winners, from Casablanca (4)
13 Man at the helm with Leverkusen (4)
17 Club side of Ruud Van Nistelrooy (3)
18 Brazilian midfielder currently with Valladolid (7)
20 Teenager who made his Norway debut against Iceland this year (5)
21 Young Verona defender recruited from Hajduk Split (5)

DOWN

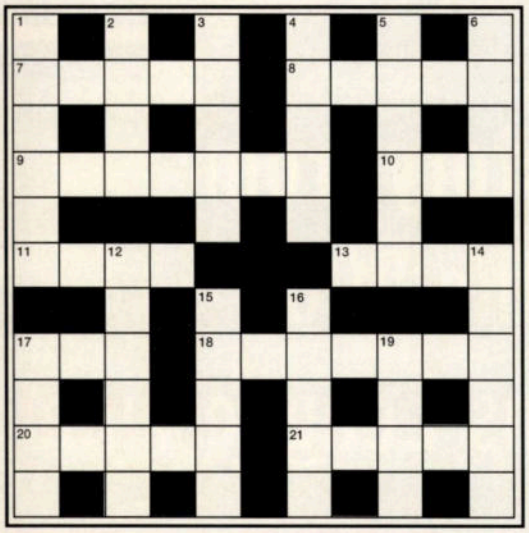
1 La Coruna and Morocco forward (6)
2 Tigana's successor at 14 Down (4)
3 Maribor and Slovenia sweeper (5)
4 Versatile Sampdoria defender capped by Yugoslavia (5)
5 Australian marksman at Celtic (6)
6 French coach in charge of Egypt at this year's African Nations Cup finals (4)
12 Former Red Star Belgrade keeper in Holland with Vitesse (6)
14 Club side of 20 Across (6)
15 Rosenborg and Norway striker on his way to Valencia (5)
16 PSG's France U-21 midfielder loaned to Rennes last season (5)
17 Gold Cup 2000 semi-finalists beaten by Colombia (4)
19 Senegal-born midfield player in France with Saint-Etienne (4)

APRIL SOLUTION

ACROSS: 1 Bragstad, 6 Alao, 7 Nedved, 9 Okafor, 10 Brady, 11 Rossi, 14 Hierro, 16 Micoud, 17 Mahe, 18 Mechelen.
DOWN: 2 Rieper, 3 Tudor, 4 Dabanovic, 5 Lato, 8 Van der Lem, 12 Stauce, 13 Tomic, 15 Iwan.

APRIL WINNERS

1st prize: Richard Barlow, Altrincham, Cheshire.
5 runners-up: Ivar Eesmann, Tallinn, Estonia; Rigo Agostino, Trento, Italy; Guy De Dekker, Holsbeek, Belgium; Ma Ho-sau, Junk Bay, Hong Kong; Walter Rossen, Deurne, Belgium.



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JUNE

Socceroos outclassed

...but keeper Kalac provides some consolation

AUSTRALIA

THE NATIONAL TEAM made the long journey to the Czech Republic for little reward, being outclassed by their hosts in a friendly.

The Czechs were three ahead just after the hour, and Craig Foster's 89th-minute reply served only to provide a flattering scoreline for an Australia team who were without six of coach Frank Farina's preferred line-up.

The Socceroos were so poor that pundits are now speculating upon Soccer Australia's ability to secure worthwhile opposition in future, unless they can guarantee putting out a full-strength side.

The one consolation was the performance of giant keeper Zeljko Kalac, who stood in for Mark Bosnich and saved his team from complete humiliation. Kalac, who played for Leicester and Wolverhampton in England before encountering work-permit problems, is now with Roda JC in the Dutch First Division.

At 29, he at last appears to have fulfilled his two main career aims – to establish himself as a professional in Europe and to consolidate a place in the Socceroo squad.

At home, Perth Glory became the sixth team to head the National Soccer League this season when they established a two-point advantage over Wollongong Wolves.

Glory, Australia's best-supported club, have seven past Australian internationals on their books, and their imports include Edgar Junior and Dion Valle, who have represented the Brazil Olympic team and Chile's youth selection respectively.

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Paul Moon

Stopped the rot...Kalac saved Australia from a heavy defeat

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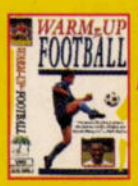

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Brian Glanville's
LAST WORD

Give home-grown players a chance

'However much foreign players may have improved technique, English players have their own large contribution to make'

Upped sticks...Stephen Hughes moved to Everton to get first-team games

FEWER FOREIGNERS in English teams? Chelsea's managing director, Colin Hutchinson, is appalled by the prospect.

There is no doubt that the Bosman decision – though absolutely unexceptionable in European law – has severely harmed the development of young native-born players.

Under Alex Ferguson, Manchester United have, however, triumphantly continued the 50-year-old policy of developing their own talent. Some from nearby, such as the Neville brothers, Paul Scholes, Nicky Butt, Ryan Giggs; others from further afield, such as David Beckham.

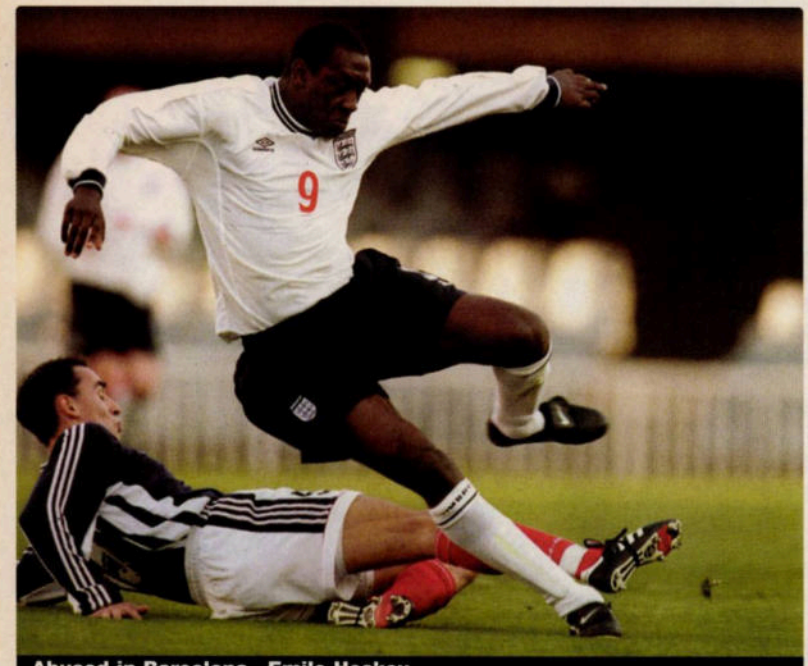
For years, Artemio Franchi, as president of UEFA, fought a battle of astonishing skill against Euro pressures to open up the game to as many Community footballers as a club desires. He had no case in law, yet kept the Community at bay like an unarmed man fending off an armed adversary.

I never did see quite why implementing the labour laws should have been part of Bosman's case, as opposed to the legitimate demand for true freedom of contract.

In the event, we have had such ludicrous situations as Chelsea taking the field in a European Cup-tie without a single British player, though the fatuous decision to keep Dennis Wise in the stand – and not even on the bench – rebounded on Gianluca Vialli and his team when Lazio took them apart at Stamford Bridge.

Across London, we have the phenomenon of Arsenal. The more money they sink into their youth scheme, the less chance their home-bred footballers seem to have of first-team play. Stephen Hughes finally had to go to Everton to get an extended chance.

Moreover, I suggest that however much foreign players may have improved the technique and tactical skill of our leading teams, English players, with their commitment and resilience, have their own large contribution to make.



Abused in Barcelona...Emile Heskey

Racism still a scar on the game

PHIL VASILI's book *Colouring Over The White Line* (Mainstream) deals in its somewhat tendentious way with the experience of black footballers in Britain. It begins very well, though the fascinating pages about the career of the black goalkeeper and champion sprinter Arthur Wharton are in fact a reprise of Vasili's previous biography.

Vasili is an admirable and energetic researcher: this rather than writing or analysis is his forte. Wharton, a Ghanaian, played in the great Preston North End team of the 1880s, and deserved richly to be remembered.

Later, alas, the book becomes bogged down in total recall of obscure players, remembered simply because they happen to be black, and at tedious length.

Vasili, moreover, stretches the book to include Asian players, and can sometimes be wilfully perverse. Frank Soo, half Chinese, a fine right-half of the 1940s and 1950s with Stoke and later Leicester, and a frequent wartime international for England, was never in his career known as Hong Yo, even if it were his Chinese appellation.

Nor has the author much sense of perspective. I write as one who has long championed black footballers in Britain. A good many years ago I wrote a short story called 'Black Magic', a satire on the bigotry of English coaches of that time towards black players. It was published initially in a London evening newspaper. Then, much to my delight, re-published in a 'black' magazine.

But things should be kept in proportion. First, matters have greatly improved since those unpleasant biased times. You no longer hear the vicious baiting like that from a group of Chelsea fans of poor Paul Canoville, the black outside-right. When, recently, Manchester City fans were accused of racially taunting their black full-back, Richard Edgehill, quite unforgivably, at least we could comfort ourselves with the knowledge that the very rarity of the case made it 'newsworthy'. There was a time when it would have been merely commonplace.

In Scotland, where racism has taken so much longer to be counteracted, it was not so long ago that the admirable John Robertson, Hearts' skipper and left-winger, actually approached his supporters at Celtic Park to deplore the vicious abuse of Paul Elliott.

But let us broaden the perspective. From Arthur Wharton, a true hero, onwards, there has never been any official bar in Britain on black footballers. Compare and contrast that with the almost incredible racism of American baseball. Not until 1947 – yes, 1947! – did Jackie Robinson become the first black to be allowed to play Major League baseball, for Brooklyn Dodgers.

Previously, black players were confined to their own segregated leagues; even though these produced as famous a pitcher as the legendary Satchel Paige.

Look too at the appalling racism to be found in Italian football, where black players, especially in the south, are subjected to shocking abuse. As we saw in the very recent case of Torino's Djibril Diawara, in Bari.

More recently still, Emile Heskey was horribly barracked in Barcelona, playing for the England Under-21 team, by a bunch of Yugoslavs.

Ferguson indebted to Busby

A RECENT poll to name the greatest manager of the century was a pretty futile exercise, given the depressing fact that football is – in this country at least – the sport without a memory. Doubly futile really, when club and country managers were not separated. And profoundly debatable, given the ultimate choice of Alex Ferguson as the century's best.

Ferguson's success with Aberdeen – in some ways even more laudable and exceptional than that with Manchester United – and with United themselves would hardly have been possible without the pioneering work of Matt Busby.

When he took over the club in 1945, Old Trafford had been so severely bombed – a tree had grown in one grandstand – that home fixtures had to be played at Maine Road.

Winner...Matt Busby

Yet in no time at all Busby had built a team which not only got outstanding results but consistently played exciting football. Above all he initiated the policy – "If you don't put them in, you can't know what you've got" – which produced an endless stream of fine young players.

Busby, too, defying the xenophobic Football League, took United into the European Cup in 1956 after Chelsea had cravenly refused the chance a year before. Busby recovered from his injuries in the Munich air crash of 1958 and won the European Cup 10 years later.

A close-run thing, that was, despite the eventual score. But no closer than United's win in 1999 when Ferguson so strangely blundered in his selection, was let off the hook when Bayern twice hit the woodwork, and ultimately saved face and game with his belated substitutions.

Any list of the century's great managers can hardly exclude Herbert Chapman, who won two successive championships with Huddersfield Town and in 1925 took over and transformed Arsenal from a mediocre club into the most powerful in Europe.

Chapman's friend Vittorio Pozzo, winner of two World Cups with Italy, in 1934 and 1938, must surely be another candidate.

How ironic that while Chapman was nurturing the Third-Back Game, Pozzo was succeeding with the tactics he had studied in England before the Great War, with their far from defensive centre-halves!

Gold Cup: a tournament too far

HOW LONG is that utterly ersatz Gold Cup tournament going to be tolerated, not least by European clubs obliged to surrender their stars? The latest of these so-called CONCACAF affairs included two South American teams – Peru and Colombia – and South Korea.

If ever there were an unnecessary and synthetic competition, this is it.

Meanwhile, you wonder when the European balloon is going to go up over the scale of the South American World Cup qualifying tournament, a 'round robin' stretched out for financial reasons over a whole 18 months – months in which endless demands are made on stars sold to European clubs, who pay the piper, but don't call the tune.

June 1965

A FRONT cover showing Davy Wilson sandwiched between George Cohen and Nobby Stiles marked the passing of another England-Scotland match, the 1965 edition ending 2-2.

In terms of the editorial focus of the issue, however, the Wembley game was a mere sideshow to the main event: the run-up to the 1966 World Cup.

Looking even further ahead, a page was devoted to preparations for the 1970 tournament. The Azteca stadium in Mexico City was already under construction and had made a great impression on Ron Griffith. "From the outside it gives one the feeling of power, reminiscent of Coventry cathedral and the ancient pyramids of Teotihaca," he wrote.

Griffith was also struck by the quality of the grass ("the deepest shade of green in all of Mexico") and noted that, since the seed had been sent from Manchester, "in some corner of a foreign field there is forever England".

Playing surfaces may have been improving, but the Rev J Eichholzer was bemoaning the increase in defensive tactics in the context of the World Cup finals group stage. He claimed that such negativity was encouraged by the use of goal average when teams finished level on points. "This has had the consequence of making a goalless draw the most rewarding result," he wrote.

As an alternative, Eichholzer proposed "a reducing scale of marks" for each goal scored, because the "tenth goal against a weak opponent is far easier to achieve than the first goal against a strong opponent".

Unfortunately, we've had to settle for goal difference and three points for a win.

The issue was notable for its eyecatching pictures. There was a shot of the French national team doing a can-can in training; a flag-waving Sion fan was captured after a 200km walk home from Berne, where his team had won the Swiss Cup for the first time; and the scene after a Switzerland v Albania World Cup qualifier when a home player, three rivals and a policeman were all attempting to take possession of the matchball.

More mundanely, four Anderlecht team-mates were pictured playing cards. One of them, Laurent Verbiest, was due to get in a lot more practice having just been suspended for eight months for assaulting a referee. Eyewitnesses said the centre-half had merely "stroked" the official's hair.

THIRTY-EIGHT

AZTECS IN 1970

Mexico's plans for staging the World Cup

By RON GRIFFITH

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